

THE *A. Cunningham*  
ODYSSEY  
OF  
HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,  
*W. H. W. H.*

BY

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VOLUME THE THIRD.

L O N D O N,

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# THE ODYSSEY.

## BOOK XIII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

The arrival of Ulysses in Ithaca.

*Ulysses takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ship arrives at Ithaca; where the sailors, as Ulysses is yet sleeping, lay him on the shore with all his treasures. On their return, Neptune changes their ship into a rock. In the mean-time, Ulysses awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reason of a mist which Pallas had cast round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; 'till the goddess appearing to him in the form of a shepherd, discovers the country to him and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned story of his adventures, upon which she manifests herself, and they consult together of the measures to be taken to destroy the suitors. To conceal his return, and disguise his person the more effectually, she changes him into the figure of an old beggar.*

HE ceas'd; but left so pleasing on their ear  
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear.  
A pause of silence hush'd the shady rooms:  
The grateful conference then the king resumes.

v. 3. ——— *The shady rooms.*]

The epithet in the original is *οἰκίστρα*, or gloomy: it is here used with a peculiar propriety, to keep in the reader's mind the exact time when Ulysses made his narration to

Whatever toils the great Ulysses past, 5  
 Beneath this happy roof they end at last ;  
 No longer now from shore to shore to roam,  
 Smooth seas, and gentle winds, invite him home.  
 But hear me, princes ! whom these walls inclose.  
 For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows 10  
 With wines unmixt, (an honour due to age,  
 To cheer the grave, and warm the poet's rage)  
 Though labour'd gold and many a dazling vest  
 Lie heap'd already for our god-like guest ;  
 Without new treasures let him not remove, 15  
 Large and expressive of the public love :  
 Each peer a tripod, each a vase bestow,  
 A gen'ral tribute, which the state shall owe.

the Phæacians, namely, in the evening of the thirty-third day : we may likewise gather, from this distinction of times, the exact stay of Ulysses among the Phæacians ; he was thrown upon their shores on the thirty-first day in the evening, and lands about day-break on the thirty-fifth day in his own country ; so that he staid three days and three nights only with Alcinous, one night being spent in his voyage to Ithaca from Phæacia.

v. 10. *For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows  
 With wine unmixt, etc.]*

Homer calls the wine *γῆρσιον*, or wine drank at the entertainment of elders, *γῆροτρον*, or men of distinction, says Eustathius ; by the bard, he means Demodocus.

The same critic further remarks, that Homer judiciously shortens every circumstance before he comes to the dismissal of Ulysses : thus he omits the description of the sacrifice, and the subject of the song of Demodocus ; these are circumstances that at best would be but useless ornaments, and ill agree with the impatience of Ulysses to be-

This sentence pleas'd: then all their steps address  
To sep'rate mansions, and retir'd to rest. 20

Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,  
And shed her sacred light along the skies.  
Down to the haven and the ships in haste  
They bore the treasures, and in safety plac'd.  
The king himself the vases rang'd with care: 25  
Then bade his followers to the feast repair.

A victim ox beneath the sacred hand  
Of great Alcinous falls, and stains the sand.  
To Jove th' eternal (pow'r above all pow'rs!  
Who wings the winds, and darkens heav'n with show'rs)  
The flames ascend: 'till evening they prolong 31

The rites, more sacred made by heav'nly song:  
For in the midst, with public honours grac'd,  
Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd.  
All, but Ulysses, heard with fix'd delight: 35

He sat, and ey'd the sun, and wish'd the night;  
Slow seem'd the sun to move, the hours to roll,  
His native home deep imag'd in his soul.

As weary plowman spent with stubborn toil,  
Whose oxen long have torn the furrow'd soil, 40

gin his voyage toward his country. These therefore the  
poet briefly dispatches.

v. 39. *As weary plowman, etc.*] The simile which  
Homer chuses is drawn from low life, but very happily  
sets off the impatience of Ulysses: it is familiar, but ex-  
pressive. Horace was not of the judgment of those who  
thought it mean, for he uses it in his epistles.

Sees with delight the sun's declining ray,  
 When home, with feeble knees, he bends his way  
 To late repast (the day's hard labour done :)  
 So to Ulysses welcome set the sun.

Then instant, to Alcinous and the rest, 45  
 (The Scherian states) he turn'd, and thus address'd.

O thou, the first in merit and command !

And you the peers and princes of the land !

May ev'ry joy be yours ! nor this the least,

When due libation shall have crown'd the feast, 50

Safe to my home to send your happy guest.

Compleat are now the bounties you have giv'n,

Be all those bounties but confirm'd by heav'n !

—dieſque

*Longa videtur opus debentibus : ut piger annus*

*Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum ;*

*Sic mihi tarda fluunt, ingrataque tempora, quæ spem*

*Conſiliumque morantur, etc.*

It was very necessary to dwell upon this impatience of Ulysses to return : it would have been absurd to have represented him cool, or even moderately warm upon this occasion ; he had refused immortality through the love of his country ; it is now in his power to return to it ; he ought therefore consistently with his former character to be drawn with the utmost earnestness of soul, and every moment must appear tedious that keeps him from it ; it shews therefore the judgment of Homer to describe him in this manner, and not to pass it over cursorily, but force it upon the notice of the reader, by insisting upon it somewhat largely, and illustrating it by a proper similitude, to fix it more strongly upon our memory.

v. 53. *Be all those bounties but confirm'd by heaven !*]

Book XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 7

So may I find, when all my wand'rings cease,  
My comfort blameless, and my friends in peace. 55

On you be ev'ry bliss, and ev'ry day  
In home-felt joys delighted roll away ;  
You, elves, your wives, your long descending race,  
May ev'ry God enrich with ev'ry grace !  
Sure fixt on virtue may your nation stand, 60  
And public evil never touch the land !

His words well weigh'd, the gen'ral voice approv'd  
Benign, and instant his dismissal mov'd.

The monarch to Pontonous gave the sign,  
To fill the goblet high with rosy wine : 65  
Great Jove the father, first (he cry'd) implore,  
Then send the stranger to his native shore.

The luscious wine th' obedient herald brought ;  
Around the mansion flow'd the purple draught :  
Each from his seat to each immortal pours, 70  
Whom glory circles in th' Olympian bow'rs.  
Ulysses sole with air majestic stands,  
The bowl presenting to Arete's hands ;

This is a pious and instructive sentence, and teaches, that though riches were heaped upon us with the greatest abundance and superfluity ; yet unless Heaven adds its benediction, they will prove but at best a burthen and calamity.

v. 73. *The bowl presenting to Arete's hands ;*

*Then thus——]*

It may be asked why Ulysses addresses his words to the queen rather than the king : the reason is, because she was his patroness, and had first received him with hospitality, as appears from the 7th book of the Odyssey.

Ulysses makes a libation to the gods, and presents the bowl to the queen : this was the pious practice of antiqui-



Then thus : O queen farewell ! be still possesst  
Of dear remembrance, blessing still and blest ! 75

'Till age and death shall gently call thee hence,  
(Sure fate of ev'ry mortal excellence !)

Farewell ! and joys successive ever spring

To thee, to thine, the people and the king !

Thus he ; then parting prints the sandy shore 80

To the fair port : a herald march'd before,

Sent by Alcinous : of Arete's train

Three chosen maids attend him to the main ;

This does a tunic and white vest convey,

A various casket that, of rich inlay, 85

And bread and wine the third. The chearful mates

Safe in the hollow deck dispose the cates :

Beneath the seats, soft painted robes they spread,

With linen cover'd, for the heroe's bed.

He climb'd the lofty stern ; then gently prest 90

The swelling couch, and lay compos'd to rest.

Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train

Their cables loose, and launch into the main :

At once they bend, and strike their equal oars,

And leave the sinking hills, and less'ning shores. 95

ty upon all solemn occasions : Ulysses here does it, because he is to undertake a voyage, and it implies a prayer for the prosperity of it. The reason why he presents the bowl to the queen is, that she may first drink out of it, for so *προπίνειν* properly and originally signifies, τὸ πρὸ ἑαυτοῦ δίδοιαι τινὶ πίνειν, says Eustathius. *Propino* is used differently by the Romans.

While on the deck the chief in silence lies,  
 And pleasing slumbers steal upon his eyes.  
 As fiery courfers in the rapid race,  
 Urg'd by fierce drivers through the dusty space,  
 Toss their high heads, and scour along the plain ; 100  
 So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main.  
 Back to the stern the parted billows flow,  
 And the black ocean foams and roars below.

v. 98. *As fiery courfers in the rapid race,  
 Toss their high heads, etc.]*

The poet introduces two similitudes to represent the sailing of the Phæacian vessel: the former describes the motion of it, as it bounds and rises over the waves, like horses tossing their heads in a race; and also the steadiness of it, in that it sails with as much firmness over the billows, as horses tread upon the ground. The latter comparison is solely to shew the swiftness of the vessel.

The word in the original is *τετραγέοι*; an instance, that four horses were sometimes joined to the chariot. Virgil has borrowed this comparison, *Æn.* 5.

*Non tam precipites bijugo certamine campum  
 Corripuere, ruuntque effusi carcere currus,  
 Nec sic immixtis aurigæ undantia lora  
 Concussere jugis, pronique in verbera pendent.*

It must be allowed that nothing was ever more happily executed than this description, and the copy far exceeds the original. Macrobius, *Saturnal.* lib. 5. gives this as his opinion, and his reasons for it. The Greek poet (says that author) paints only the swiftness of the horses when scourged by the driver; Virgil adds, the rushing of the chariot, the fields as it were devoured by the rapidity of the horses; we see the throwing up of the reins in *undantia lora*; and the attitude of the driver leaning forward



Thus with spread sails the winged galley flies;  
 Less swift an eagle cuts the liquid skies: 105  
 Divine Ulysses was her sacred load,  
 A man, in wisdom equal to a god!  
 Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,  
 In storms by sea, and combats on the shore;  
 All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast, 110  
 Wrapt in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.  
 But when the morning star with early ray  
 Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day;

in the act of lashing of the horses, in the words, *Pronique in verbera pendent*. It is true, nothing could be added more elegantly than the ὑψος ἀειρόμενοι, in Homer; it paints at once the swiftness of the race, and the rising posture of the horses in the act of running; but Virgil is more copious, and has omitted no circumstance, and set the whole race fully before our eyes; we may add, that the versification is as beautiful as the description complete; every ear must be sensible of it.

I will only further observe the judgment of Homer in speaking of every person in his particular character. When a vain-glorious Phæacian described the sailing of his own vessels, they were swift as thought, and endued with reason; when Homer speaks in his own person to his readers, they are said only to be as swift as hawks or horses: Homer speaks like a poet, with some degree of amplification, but not with so much hyperbole as Alcinous. No people speak so fondly as sailors of their own ships to this day, and particularly are still apt to talk of them as of living creatures.

v. 112. *But when the morning star with early ray  
 Flam'd in the front of heav'n———]*

From this passage we may gather, that Ithaca is distant from Corcyra or Phæacia no farther than a vessel sails in

Like distant clouds the mariner descries  
 Fair Ithaca's emerging hills arise. 113  
 Far from the town a spacious port appears,  
 Sacred to Phorcys' pow'r, whose name it bears :  
 Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,  
 The roaring winds tempestuous rage restrain ;  
 Within, the waves in softer murmurs glide, 120  
 And ships secure without their haulsers ride.  
 High at the head a branching olive grows,  
 And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.

the compass of one night; and this agrees with the real distance between those islands; an instance that Homer was well acquainted with geography: this is the morning of the thirty-fifth day.

v. 116. — *A spacious port appears,  
 Sacred to Phorcys—*]

Phorcys was the son of Pontus and Terra, according to Hesiod's genealogy of the gods; this haven is said to be sacred to that deity, because he had a temple near it, from whence it received its appellation.

The whole voyage of Ulysses to his country, and indeed the whole Odyssey, has been turned into allegory; which I will lay before the reader as an instance of a trifling industry and strong imagination. Ulysses is in search of true felicity, the Ithaca and Penelope of Homer: he runs through many difficulties and dangers; this shews that happiness is not to be attained without labour and afflictions. He has several companions, who perish by their vices, and he alone escapes by the assistance of the Phæacians, and is transported in his sleep to his country; that is, the Phæacians, whose name implies blackness, *Φαίος*, are the mourners at his death, and attend him to his grave: the ship is his grave, which is afterwards turned into a rock; which represents his monumental marble; his sleep

Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool recess  
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas ;

means death, through which alone man arrives at eternal felicity. *Spondanus.*

v. 124. ——— *A gloomy grotto's cool recess.]*

Porphyry has wrote a volume to explain this cave of the nymphs, with more piety perhaps than judgment ; and another person has perverted it into the utmost obscenity, and both allegorically. Porphyry (observes Eustathius) is of opinion, that the cave means the world ; it is called gloomy, but agreeable, because, it was made out of darkness, and afterwards set in this agreeable order by the hand of the deity. It is consecrated to the nymphs ; that is, it is destined to be the habitation of spiritual substances united to the body : the bowls and urns of living stone, are the body which are formed out of the earth ; the bees that make their honey in the cave are the souls of men, which perform all their operations in the body, and animate it ; the beams on which the nymphs roul their webs, are the bones over which the admirable embroidery of nerves, veins, and arteries are spread ; the fountains which water the cave are the seas, rivers and lakes, that water the world ; and the two gates are the two poles ; through the northern the souls descend from heaven to animate the body ; through the southern they ascend to heaven, after they are separated from the body by death. But I confess I should rather chuse to understand the description poetically, believing that Homer never dreamed of these matters, though the age in which he flourished was addicted to allegory. How often do painters draw from the imagination only, merely to please the eye ! and why might not Homer write after it, especially in this place where he manifestly indulges his fancy, while he brings his hero to the first dawning of happiness ? he has long dwelt upon a series of horrors, and his imagination being tired with the melancholy story, it is not impossible but

Where bowls and urns were form'd of living stone,

And massy beams in native marble shone ;

On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd,

Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.

Within the cave, the clustring bees attend

130

Their waxen works, or from the roof depend.

Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide ;

Two marble doors unfold on either side ;

Sacred the south, by which the gods descend,

But mortals enter at the northern end.

135

his spirit might be enlivened with the subject while he wrote, and this might lead him to indulge his fancy in a wonderful, and perhaps fabulous description. In short, I should much rather chuse to believe that the memory of the things to which he alludes in the description of the cave is lost, than credit such a laboured and distant allegory.

v. 134. *Sacred the south, by which the gods descend.* Virgil has imitated the description of this haven, *Æn.* lib. i.

*Est in secessu longo locus, insula portum  
Efficit, objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto  
Frangitur, etc.*

Within a long recess there lies a bay,  
An island shades it from the rolling sea,  
And forms a port secure for ships to ride,  
Broke by the jutting land on either side,  
In double streams the briny waters glide.  
Betwixt two rows of rocks, a sylvan scene  
Appears above, and groves for ever green:  
A grott is form'd beneath with mossy seats,  
To rest the Nereids, and exclude the heats:

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ship to land,  
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand)

Down from the crannies of the living walls  
The chrystal streams descend in murmuring falls,  
No haulfers need to bind the vessels here,  
Nor bearded anchors, for no storms they fear.

Dryden.

Scaliger infinitely prefers the Roman poet: Homer, says he, speaks *humilia humiliter*, *Virgilius grandiora magnifice*; but what I would chiefly observe is, not what Virgil has imitated, but what he has omitted; namely, all that seems odd or less intelligible; I mean the works of the bees in a cave so damp and moist; and the two gates through which the gods and men enter.

I shall offer a conjecture to explain these two lines.

*Sacred the south, by which the gods descend,  
But mortals enter at the northern end.*

It has been already observed, that the Æthiopians held an annual sacrifice of twelve days to the gods; all that time they carried their images in procession, and placed them at their festivals, and for this reason the gods were said to feast with the Æthiopians; that is, they were present with them by their statues: thus also Themis was said to form or dissolve assemblies, because they carried her image to the assemblies, when they were convened, and when they were broken up they carried it away. Now we have already remarked, that this port was sacred to Phorcys, because he had a temple by it: it may not then be impossible, but that this temple having two doors, they might carry the statues of the gods in their processions, through the southern gate, which might be consecrated to this use only, and the populace be forbid to enter by it: for that reason the deities were said to enter, namely, by their images. As the other gate being allotted to common use, was said to be the passage for mortals.



Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,  
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.

v. 138. *Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,  
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.*]

There is nothing in the whole *Odyssey* that more shocks our reason than the exposing Ulysses asleep on the shores by the Phæacians: 'the passage (says Aristotle in his *Poetics*) where Ulysses is landed in Ithaca, is so full of absurdities, that they would be intolerable in a bad poet; but Homer has concealed them under an infinity of admirable beauties, with which he has adorned all that part of the *Odyssey*; these he has crouded together, as so many charms to hinder our perceiving the defects of the story;' Aristotle must be allowed to speak with great judgment; for what probability is there that a man so prudent as Ulysses, who was alone in a vessel at the discretion of strangers, should sleep so soundly as to be taken out of it, carried with all his baggage on shore, and the Phæacians should set sail and he never awake? this is still more absurd, if we remember that Ulysses has his soul so strongly bent upon his country: is it then possible, that he could be thus sunk into a lethargy, in the moment when he arrives at it? 'However (says Mons. Dacier in his reflections upon Aristotle's *Poetics*) Homer was not ashamed of that absurdity, but not being able to omit it, he used it to give probability to the succeeding story: it was necessary for Ulysses to land alone, in order to his concealment; if he had been discovered, the suitors would immediately have destroyed him, if not as the real Ulysses, yet under the pretext of his being an impostor; they would then have seized his dominions, and married Penelope: now if he had been waked, the Phæacians would have been obliged to have attended him, which he could not have denied with decency, nor accepted with safety: Homer therefore had no other way left to unravel his fable happily: but he knew what was absurd in this method, and uses means to hide it; he lavishes

His treasures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid

140

In the wild olive's unfrequented shade,

out all his wit and address, and lays together such an abundance of admirable poetry, that the mind of the reader is so enchanted that he perceives not the defect; he is like Ulysses lull'd asleep, and knows no more than that hero, how he comes there. That great poet first describes the ceremony of Ulysses taking leave of Alcinous and his queen Arete; then he sets off the swiftness of the vessel by two beautiful comparisons; he describes the haven with great exactness, and adds to it the description of the cave of the nymphs; this last astonishes the reader, and he is so intent upon it, that he has not attention to consider the absurdity in the manner of Ulysses's landing: in this moment when he perceives the mind of the reader as it were intoxicated with these beauties, he steals Ulysses on shore, and dismisses the Phæacians; all this takes but up eight verses. And then lest the reader should reflect upon it, he immediately introduces the deities, and gives us a dialogue between Jupiter and Neptune. This keeps up still our wonder, and our reason has not time to deliberate; and when the dialogue is ended, a second wonder succeeds, the bark is transformed into a rock: this is done in the sight of the Phæacians, by which method the poet carries us a while from the consideration of Ulysses, by removing the scene to a distant island; there he detains us till we may be supposed to have forgot the past absurdities by relating the astonishment of Alcinous at the sight of the prodigy, and his offering up to Neptune, to appease his anger, a sacrifice of twelve bulls. Then he returns to Ulysses who now wakes, and not knowing the place where he was, (because Minerva made all things appear in a disguised view) he complains of his misfortunes, and accuses the Phæacians of infidelity; at length Minerva comes to him in the shape of a young shepherd,

Secure from theft ; then launch'd the bark again,  
 Resum'd their oars, and measur'd back the main.

' etc. Thus this absurdity, which appears in the fable,  
 ' when examined alone, is hidden by the beauties that sur-  
 ' round it. This passage is more adorned with fiction,  
 ' and more wrought up with a variety of poetical orna-  
 ' ments than most other places of the *Odyssey*. From hence  
 ' Aristotle makes an excellent observation. All efforts i-  
 ' maginable (says that author) ought to be made to form  
 ' the fable rightly from the beginning ; but if it so happen  
 ' that some places must necessarily appear absurd they must  
 ' be admitted, especially if they contribute to render the  
 ' rest more probable ; but the poet ought to reserve all  
 ' the ornaments of diction for these weak parts : the pla-  
 ' ces that have either shining sentiments or manners have  
 ' no occasion for them, a dazzling expression rather da-  
 ' mages them, and serves only to eclipse their beauty.'

v. 142.—*Then launch'd the bark again.*] This vo-  
 luntary and unexpected return of the Phæacians, and their  
 landing Ulysses in his sleep, seems as unaccountable on the  
 part of the Phæacians, as of Ulysses ; for what can be  
 more absurd than to see them exposing a king and his ef-  
 fects upon the shores without his knowledge, and flying a-  
 way secretly as from an enemy ? Having therefore in the  
 preceding note shewed what the critics say in condemna-  
 tion of Homer, it is but justice to lay together what they  
 say in his defence.

That the Phæacians should fly away in secret is no won-  
 der : Ulysses had thro' the whole course of the eleventh  
 book (particularly by the mouth of the prophet Tiresias)  
 told the Phæacians that the suitors plotted his destruction ;  
 and therefore the mariners might very reasonably be ap-  
 prehensive that the suitors would use any persons as ene-  
 mies, who should contribute to restore Ulysses to his coun-  
 try. It was therefore necessary that they should sail away  
 without any stay upon the Ithacan shores. This is the rea-  
 son why they made this voyage by night ; namely to avoid

Nor yet forgot old Ocean's dread supreme  
The vengeance vow'd for eyeless Polypheme.

145

discovery ; and it was as necessary to return immediately, that is, just at the appearance of day, before people were abroad, that they might escape observation.

Eustathius remarks, that the Phæacians were an unwarlike nation, or as it is expressed by a Phæacian,

Οὐ γὰρ Φαιήκισσι μέλει βίος, ὅυδ' ἐφαίτερον.

and therefore they were afraid to teach any persons the way to their own country by discovering the course of navigation to it : for this reason they begin their voyage to Ithaca by night, land Ulysses without waking him, and return at the appearance of day-light, that they might not shew what course was to be steered to come to the Phæacian shores.

Plutarch, in his treatise of reading the poets, tells us, that there is a tradition among the Tuscans, that Ulysses was naturally drowsy, and a person that could not easily be conversed with, by reason of that sleepy disposition. But perhaps this might be only artful in a man of so great wisdom, and so great disguise or dissimulation ; he was slow to give answers, when he had no mind to give any at all : though indeed it must be confessed, that this tradition is countenanced by his behaviour in the *Odyssey*, or rather may be only a story formed from it : his greatest calamities rise from his sleeping : when he was ready to land upon his own country by the favour of *Æolus*, he falls asleep, and his companions let loose a wind that bears him from it : he is asleep while they kill the oxen of *Apollo* ; and here he sleeps while he is landed upon his own country. It might perhaps be this conduct in *Homer*, that gave *Horace* the hint to say,

— *Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus.*

implying that when *Homer* was at a loss to bring any diffi-



Before the throne of mighty Jove he stood ;  
And fought the secret counsels of the god.

cult matter to an issue, he immediately laid his hero asleep, and this salved all the difficulty ; as in the above-mentioned instances.

Plutarch is of opinion that this sleep of Ulysses was feigned ; and that he made use of the pretence of a natural infirmity, to conceal the streights he was in at that time in his thoughts ; being ashamed to dismiss the Phæacians without entertainment and gifts of hospitality, and afraid of being discovered by the suitors, if he entertained such a multitude : therefore to avoid both these difficulties, he feigns a sleep while they land him, till they sail away.

Eustathius agrees with Plutarch in the main, and adds another reason why the Phæacians land Ulysses sleeping ; namely, because they were ashamed to wake him, lest he should think they did it out of avarice, and expectation of a reward for bringing him to his own country.

I will only add that there might be a natural reason for the sleep of Ulysses ; we are to remember that this is a voyage in the night, the season of repose ; and his spirits, having been long agitated and fatigued by his calamities, might upon his peace of mind at the return to his country settle into a deep calmness and tranquillity, and so sink him into a deep sleep. Homer himself seems to give this as a reason of it in the following lines :

*Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,  
In storms by sea, and combats on the shore :  
All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast,  
Wrapt in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.*

It must be allowed that the last line admirably paves the way for the following account ; and the poet undoubtedly inserted it, to prevent our surprize at the manner of his being set on shore, by calling his sleep



Shall then no more, O fire of gods ! be mine  
 The rights and honours of a pow'r divine ?  
 Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh severe disgrace) 150  
 By soft Phæacians, my degenerate race !  
 Against yon destin'd head in vain I swore,  
 And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his shore ;  
 To reach his natal shore was thy decree ;  
 Mild I obey'd, for who shall war with thee ? 155  
 Behold him landed, careless and asleep,  
 From all th' eluded dangers of the deep !  
 Lo where he lies, amidst a shining store  
 Of brass, rich garments, and refulgent ore :  
 And bears triumphant to his native isle 160  
 A prize more worth than Ilion's noble spoil.  
 To whom the father of th' immortal pow'rs,  
 Who swells the clouds, and gladdens earth with show'rs,  
 Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain !  
 Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundless main ! 165  
 Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes,  
 Antient and great ! a god above the gods !

—*a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.*

How far a wise man is obliged to resist the calls of nature,  
 I leave to the discussion of philosophers ; those of sleep  
 are no more to be resisted than those of thirst or hunger.  
 But yet I confess Ulysses yielded unseasonably, and the  
 strong passion and love for his country that so fully pos-  
 sessed his soul, should have given him a few hours of vi-  
 gilance, when he was ready to see it after an absence al-  
 most of twenty years.

If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,  
(Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?

Go then, the guilty at thy will chastise.

170

He said: the shaker of the earth replies.

This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship  
A mark of vengeance on the sable deep:

v. 172. *This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship*

*A mark of vengeance——*

*And roots her down, an everlasting rock.]*

I refer the reader to the 8th book of the *Odyssey*, for a further account of this transformation. Scaliger condemns it, *Ulyssis navis in saxum mutatur a Neptuno, ut immortalē faciat, quem odio habere debuit*. But will it not be an answer to say, that it is an immortal monument of the vengeance and power of Neptune, and that whenever the story of the vessel was mentioned, the punishment likewise must be remembered in honour of that deity? Some are of opinion, that it is a physical allegory, and that Homer delivers the opinion of the ancients concerning the transmutation of one species into another, as wood into stone, by water, that is by Neptune the god of it; according to those lines of Ovid:

*Flumen habent Cicones, quod potum saxea reddit*

*Viscera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus.*

But perhaps this is only one of those marvellous fictions written after the taste of antiquity, which delighted in wonders, and which the nature of epic poetry allows. 'The marvellous (says Aristotle in his *Poetics*) ought to take place in tragedy, but much more in the epic, in which it proceeds even to the extravagant; for the marvellous is always agreeable, and a proof of it is, that those who relate any thing, generally add something to the truth of it, that it may better please those who hear it. Homer (continues he) is the man who has given the best in-

To warn the thoughtless, self-confiding train,  
 No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main.  
 Full in their port a shady hill shall rise,  
 If such thy will——We will it, Jove replies.

175

'structions to other poets how to tell lies agreeably.' Horace is of the same opinion.

*Atque ita mentitur, sic veris salsa remiscet,  
 Primo ne medium medio ne discrepet imum.*

However we must not think that Aristotle advises poets to put things evidently false and impossible into their poems, or gives them license to run out into wildness; he only means (as monsieur Dacier observes) that the wonderful should exceed the probable, but not destroy it; and this will be effected if the poet has the address to prepare the reader, and to lead him by a probable train of things that depend on miracle, to the miracle itself, and reconcile him to it by degrees, so that his reason does not perceive, at least is not shocked at the illusion; thus for instance, Homer puts this transformation into the hands of a deity; he prepares us for it in the 8th book, he gives us the reason of the transformation; namely the anger of Neptune; and at last he brings in Jupiter assenting to it. This is the method Homer takes to reconcile it to probability. Virgil undoubtedly thought it a beauty, for after Homer's example he gives us a transformation of the ships of Æneas into sea nymphs.

I have already remarked from Bossu, that such miracles as these ought not to be too frequent in an epic poem: all the machines that require divine probability ought to be so detached from the action of the poem, that they may be retrenched from it, without destroying the action: those that are essential to the action, ought to be founded upon human probability. Thus if we take away this transformation, there is no chasm; and it in no way affects the integrity of the action.

Ev'n when with transport blackning all the strand,  
 The swarming people hail their ship to land,  
 Fix her for ever, a memorial stone. 180  
 Still let her seem to sail, and seem alone;  
 The trembling crouds shall see the sudden shade  
 Of whelming mountains overhang their head!

With that the god whose earthquakes rock the ground  
 Pierce to Phæacia crost the vast profound. 185

Swift as a swallow sweeps the liquid way,  
 The winged pinnace shot along the sea.  
 The god arrests her with a sudden stroke,  
 And roots her down an everlasting rock.  
 Aghast the Scherians stand in deep surprize; 190

All press to speak, all question with their eyes.  
 What hands unseen the rapid bark restrain!  
 And yet it swims, or seems to swim, the main!  
 Thus they, unconscious of the deed divine:  
 Till great Alcinous rising own'd the sign. 195

Behold the long predestin'd day! (he cries)  
 On certain faith of antient prophecies!  
 These ears have heard my royal sire disclose  
 A dreadful story, big with future woes;  
 How mov'd with wrath that careless we convey 200  
 Promiscuous ev'ry guest to ev'ry bay,  
 Scorn Neptune rag'd; and how by his command  
 Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand;  
 (A monument of wrath) and mound on mound  
 Should hide our walls, or whelm beneath the ground. 205

The fates have follow'd as declar'd the seer.  
 Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear.

No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more  
 With ev'ry stranger pass from shore to shore;  
 On angry Neptune now for mercy call: 210  
 To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.  
 So may the god reverse his purpos'd will,  
 Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.

The monarch spoke: they trembled and obey'd,  
 Forth on the sands the victim oxen led: 215

v. 212. *So may the god reverse his purpos'd will.*]

This agrees with what Homer writes in a former part of the *Odyssey*,

——— *ἐπιπτοὶ καὶ θεοὶ αὐτοὶ.*

That the gods themselves may be prevailed upon to change their anger by prayer: a sentiment agreeable to true religion. Homer does not tell us that the last denunciation of covering the town with a mountain, was fulfilled: it is probable that it was averted by the piety of Alcinous. But (as Eustathius observes) it was artful in the poet to leave this point doubtful, to avoid detection in deviating from true history: for should posterity enquire where this land of the Phæacians lay, it would be found to be Corfu of the Venetians, and not covered with any mountain; but should this city have happened to have been utterly abolished by time, and so lost to posterity, it would have agreed with the relation of Homer, who leaves room to suppose it destroyed by Neptune. But how could Neptune be said to cover it with a mountain? had not an inundation been more suitable to the god of the ocean? Neptune is called *ἐννοσίγαιος* and *ἐννοσίχθων*, or the Earth-shaker; earthquakes were supposed to be occasioned by the ocean or waters concealed in the caverns of the ground; and consequently Neptune may tumble a mountain upon this city of the Phæacians.



The gather'd tribes before the altars stand,  
 And chiefs and rulers, a majestic band.  
 The king of Ocean all the tribes implore;  
 The blazing altars redden all the shore.

Meanwhile Ulysses in his country lay,  
 Releas'd from sleep, and round him might survey  
 The solitary shore and rolling sea.  
 Yet had his mind through tedious absence lost  
 The dear remembrance of his native coast,  
 Besides Minerva, to secure her care,  
 Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air :

220

}

225

v. 225. *Besides Minerva, to secure her care,*

*Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air.]*

The meaning of this whole passage is probably no more than that Ulysses by his long absence had forgot the face of his own country; the woods by almost twenty years growth had a different appearance; and the public roads were altered by so great a length of time. How then should Ulysses come to the knowledge of the place? he goes to a shepherd, and by telling him a plausible story draws it from him. This artifice is the Minerva that gives him information. By the *veil of thicken'd air* is meant, that Ulysses to accomplish his re-establishment, took upon him a disguise, and concealed himself from the Ithacans; and this too being the dictate of wisdom, Homer ascribes it to Pallas.

The words of the original are,

——— "Οφθαλμοῖς αὐτῶν

"Αγνώστον τεύχεσιν ———

which are usually applied by interpreters to Ulysses, and mean that the goddess disguised him with this veil, that no one might know him. Dacier is of opinion that *αγνώστος* ought to be used actively; that is, the goddess acted thus to make him *unknowing* where he was, not *un-*

For so the gods ordain'd to keep unseen  
 His royal person from his friends and queen ;  
 'Till the proud suitors for their crimes afford  
 An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord. 230

Now all the land another prospect bore,  
 Another port appear'd, another shore,  
 And long continu'd ways, and winding floods,  
 And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods.  
 Pensive and slow, with sudden grief oppress'd 235  
 The king arose, and beat his careful breast,  
 Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,  
 And sought, around, his native realm in vain :

*known to the people ; for that this was the effect of the veil appears from the removal of it ; for immediately upon the dispersion,*

*The king with joy confess'd his place of birth.*

That the word ἀγνώστος will bear an active signification, she proves from the scholiast upon Oedipus of Sophocles. But perhaps the context will not permit this interpretation, though we should allow that the word ἀγνώστος will bear it. The passage runs thus : Pallas cast round a veil of air, that she might make him unknown, that she might instruct him, and that his wife and friends might not know him ; for thus Homer interprets ἀγνώστον in the very next line, μὴ γνοῖν ἄλοχος. It is therefore probable that this veil had a double effect, both to render Ulysses unknown to the country, and the country to Ulysses. I am persuaded that this is the true meaning of ἀγνώστος, from the usage of it in this very book of the Odyssey :

Ἄλλ' ἀγὼς σ' ἀγνώστον τεύξω πάνισσι βροτοῖσι.

Here it can possibly signify nothing but, *I will render thee unknown to all mankind ;* it is therefore probable, that in both places it bears the same signification.

Then with erected eyes stood fix'd in woe,  
And as he spoke, the tears began to flow. 240

Ye gods ! (he cry'd) upon what barren coast  
In what new region is Ulysses tost ?  
Possess'd by wild barbarians, fierce in arms ?  
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms ?  
Where shall this treasure now in safety lie ? 245

And whither, whither its sad owner fly ?  
Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore ?  
Ah why forsake Phæacia's happy shore ?  
Some juster prince perhaps had entertain'd,  
And safe restor'd me to my native land. 250

Is this the promis'd, long expected coast,  
And this the faith Phæacia's rulers boast ?  
Oh righteous gods ! of all the great, how few  
Are just to heav'n, and to their promise true !  
But he, the Pow'r to whose all-seeing eyes 255

The deeds of men appear without disguise,  
'Tis his alone t' avenge the wrongs I bear :  
For still th' oppress'd are his peculiar care.

To count these presents, and from thence to prove  
Their faith, is mine : the rest belongs to Jove. 260

Then on the sands he rang'd his wealthy store,  
The gold, the vests, the tripods, number'd o'er :

v. 262. *The gold, the vests, the tripods number'd o'er.*] The conduct of Ulysses in numbering his effects, has been censured by some critics as avaricious : but we find him vindicated by Plutarch in his treatise of reading the poets : ' If (says that author) Ulysses finding himself ' in a solitary place, and ignorant of the country, and having no security even for his own person, is nevertheless

All these he found, but still in error lost  
 Disconsolate he wanders on the coast,  
 Sighs for his country, and laments again 265  
 To the deaf rocks, and hoarse-resounding main.  
 When lo ! the guardian goddess of the wise,  
 Celestial Pallas, stood before his eyes ;  
 In show a youthful swain of form divine,  
 Who seem'd descended from some princely line. 270  
 A graceful robe her slender body drest,  
 Around her shoulders flew the waving vest,  
 Her decent hand a shining javelin bore,  
 And painted sandals on her feet she wore.  
 To whom the king. Whoe'er of human race' 275  
 Thou art, that wander'st in this desert place !  
 With joy to thee, as to some god, I bend,  
 To thee my treasures and myself commend.  
 O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to stray,  
 What air I breathe, what country I survey ? 280  
 The fruitful continent's extremest bound,  
 Or some fair isle which Neptune's arms surround ?

' chiefly solicitous for his effects, lest any part might have  
 ' been stolen : his covetousness is really to be pitied and  
 ' detested. But this is not the case : he counts his goods  
 ' merely to prove the fidelity of the Phæacians, and to ga-  
 ' ther from it, whether they had landed him upon his own  
 ' country ; for it was not probable that they would ex-  
 ' pose him in a strange region, and leave his goods un-  
 ' touched, and by consequence reap no advantage from their  
 ' dishonesty : This therefore was the proper test, from  
 ' which to discover, if he was in his own country, and he  
 ' deserved commendation for his wisdom in that action.

From what far clime (said she) remote from fame,  
 Arriv'st thou here a stranger to our name?  
 Thou see'st an island, not to those unknown 285  
 Whose hills are brighten'd by the rising sun,  
 Nor those that plac'd beneath his utmost reign  
 Behold him sinking in the western main.  
 The rugged soil allows no level space  
 For flying chariots or the rapid race; 290  
 Yet not ungrateful to the peasant's pain,  
 Suffices fulness to the swelling grain:  
 The loaded trees their various fruits produce,  
 And clust'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice:

v. 293. *The loaded trees their various fruits produce*  
 Nothing is more notorious than that an epic writer ought  
 to give importance and grandeur to his action as much as  
 possible in every circumstance; here the poet takes an op-  
 portunity to set the country of Ulysses in the most advan-  
 tageous light, and shews that it was a prize worth the con-  
 test, and all the labour which Ulysses bestows to regain it.  
 Statius is very faulty in this particular; he declaims against  
 the designs he ascribes to his heroes, he debases his own  
 subject, and shews that the great labour he puts upon them  
 was ill employed for so wretched and pitiful a kingdom as  
 that of Thebes. *Thebaid. lib. 1.*

——— *Bellum est de paupere regno.*

But Ulysses was not king of Ithaca alone, but of Zacyn-  
 thus, and Cephalenia, and the neighbouring islands. This  
 appears from the second book of the Iliad, where he leads  
 his subjects to the wars of Troy.

*With those whom Cephalenia's isle inclos'd,  
 Or till'd their fields along the coast oppos'd  
 Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,  
 Where high Neritos shakes his waving woods,*



Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove 295

The bounding goats and frisking heifers rove :

Soft rains and kindly dews refresh the field,

And rising springs eternal verdure yield.

Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd,

Where Troy's majestic ruins strow the ground: 300

*Where Æglipia's rugged sides are seen,  
Crocyliæ rocky, and Zacynthus green.*

It is true that Ithaca contains little more than fifty miles in circuit, now called *Val de compare* ; Cephalenia is larger, and is one hundred and sixty miles in circumference : Zacynthus, now Zant, is in circuit about sixty miles, unspeakably fruitful, says Sandys, producing the best oil in the world and excellent strong wines ; but the chief riches of the island consists in Corinths, which the inhabitants of Zant have in such quantities that they know not what to do with them ; for besides private gains, amounting to fifteen hundred thousand Zechins, they yearly pay forty-eight thousand dollars for customs and other duties. It is impossible so little a portion of earth should be more beneficial.

This observation is necessary to shew the value of Ulysses's dominions, and that the subject of the *Odyssey* is not trivial and unimportant ; it is likewise of use to convince us, that the domestic cares and concerns of Telemachus proceeded not from meanness, but from the manners of the age ; when pomp and luxury had not yet found countenance from princes ; and that when we see Eumæus, who has the charge of Ulysses's hogs, we are not to suppose him a person of low rank and fortunes, but an officer of state, and trust : the riches of those ages consisting in flocks and herds, in swine, and oxen.

v. 299. *Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd.*] Nothing can more raise our esteem of the judgment of Homer, than such strokes of art. Here he introduces Miner-

At this, the chief with transport was possess'd,  
His panting heart exulted in his breast;  
Yet well dissembling his untimely joys,  
And veiling truth in plausible disguise,  
Thus, with an air sincere, in fiction bold,  
His ready tale th' inventive hero told.

305

Oft have I heard in Crete, this island's name;  
For 'twas from Crete my native soil I came,  
Self-banish'd thence. I sail'd before the wind,  
And left my children and my friends behind.  
From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,  
Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I slew:

310

va to let Ulysses into the knowledge of his country: how does she do this? she geographically describes it to him; so that he must almost know it by the description: but still she suppresses the name, and this keeps him in a pleasing suspense; he attends to every syllable to hear her name Ithaca, which she still defers, to continue his doubts and hopes, and at last in the very close of her speech she indirectly mentions it. This discovery in my judgment is carried on with great address, and cannot fail of awakening the curiosity of the reader! and I wonder how it could escape the observation of all the commentators upon the Odyssey.

v. 311. *From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,  
Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I slew.*]

Eustathius observes that this relation is not consonant to ancient histories, but invented to make the disguised Ulysses more acceptable to the suitors, should he be brought before them: for this person whom they could not know to be Ulysses. could not fail of finding favour with them, having slain the son of Idomeneus the friend of Ulysses: and though it be not recorded by the ancients, yet it may be conjectured, that Orsilochus was thus slain, though not

(With brutal force he seiz'd my Trojan prey.

Due to the toils of many a bloody day)

Unseen I 'scap'd; and favour'd by the night

31

In a Phœnician vessel took my flight,

by Ulysses. If the death of Orsilochnus was a story that made a noise in the world about that time, it was very artful in Ulysses to make use of it, to gain credit with this seeming Ithacan; for he relating the fact truly, might justly be believed to speak truly when he named himself the author of it, and consequently avoid all suspicion of being Ulysses. It is observable that Ulysses is very circumstantial in his story, he relates the time, the place, the manner, and the reason of his killing Orsilochnus: this is done to give the story a greater air of truth; for it seems almost impossible that so many circumstances could be invented in a moment, and so well laid together as not to discover their own falsity. What he says concerning the Phœnicians leaving his effects entire without any damage is not spoken (as Eustathius observes) in vain: he extols the fidelity of the Phœnicians, as an example to be imitated by this seeming Ithacensian, and makes it an argument that he should practise the same integrity, in not offering violence or fraud to his effects or person.

It is true, the manner of the death of Orsilochnus is liable to some objection, as it was executed clandestinely, and not heroically, as might be expected from the valour of Ulysses: but if it was truth that Orsilochnus was killed in that manner, Ulysses could not falsify the story: but in reality he is no way concerned in it; for he speaks in the character of a Cretan, not in the character of Ulysses.

v. 316. *In a Phœnician vessel took my flight.*] The whole story of the voyages of Ulysses is related differently by Dictys Cretensis, in his history of the war of Troy: I will transcribe it, if not as a truth, yet as a curiosity.

• About this time Ulysses arrived at Crete with two  
• vessels hired of the Phœnicians: for Telamon, enraged  
• for the death of his son Ajax, had seized upon all that

For Pyle or Elis bound : but tempests tost

And raging billows drove us on your coast.

In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,

Spent with fatigue, and slept secure on land.

320

But ere the rosy morn renew'd the day,

While in th' embrace of pleasing sleep I lay,

Sudden, invited by auspicious gales,

They land my goods, and hoist their flying sails.

belonged to Ulysses and his companions, and he himself was with difficulty set at liberty. While he was in Crete, Idomeneus asked him how he fell into such great calamities ; to whom he recounted all his adventures. He told him that after his departure from Troy he made an incursion upon Ismarus of the Ciconians, and there got great booty ; then touching upon the coast of the Lætophagi, he met with ill success, and sailed away to Sicily ; there Cyclops and Læstrigon two brothers used him barbarously ; and at length he lost most of his companions through the cruelty of Polypheme and Antiphatēs, the sons of Cyclops and Læstrigon ; but being afterwards received into favour by Polypheme, his companions attempted to carry off Arene the king's daughter, who was fallen in love with Elpenor, one of his associates ; but the affair being discovered, and Ulysses dismissed, he sailed away by the Æolian islands, and came to Circe and Calypso, who were both queens of two isles ; there his companions wasted some time in dalliance and pleasures : thence he sailed to a people that were famed for magical incantations, to learn his future fortunes. He escaped the rocks of the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, tho' he there lost many of his companions ; then he fell into the hands of Phœnician rovers, who spared him ; and afterwards coming to Crete he was dismissed by Idomeneus with two vessels, and arrived upon the coast of Alcinous, who being prevailed upon

Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore,  
A hapless exile on a foreign shore.

Thus while he spoke, the blue-ey'd maid began  
With pleasing smiles to view the godlike man :  
Then chang'd her form ; and now, divinely bright,  
Jove's heav'nly daughter stood confess'd to sight.  
Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,  
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

' by the glory of his name entertained him courteously  
' from him he learned that Penelope was address'd by  
' thirty princes ; upon this with much intreaty, he per-  
' suaded Alcinous to undertake a voyage to re-establish  
' him in his territories ; they set sail together, and con-  
' cealing themselves with Telemachus 'till all things were  
' concerted, they led their friends to the palace, and slew  
' the suitors oppress'd with sleep and drowziness.'

The difference between the poet and the historian lies chiefly in what is here said of the death of Orsilochus ; Dictys tells us, that Ulysses was entertained like a friend by Idomeneus, and Homer writes that he slew his son : now Idomeneus cannot be suppos'd to have favoured the murderer of his son : but this is no objection, if we consider that Ulysses speaks not as Ulysses, but in a personated character, and therefore Orsilochus must be judged to have fallen by the hand of the person whose character Ulysses assumes ; that is, by a Cretan and not Ulysses.

Dictys is supposed to have served under this Idomeneus, and to have wrote an history of the Trojan war in Phœnician characters ; and Tzetzes tells us that Homer formed his poem upon this plan ; but the history now extant published by Mrs. LeFevre is a counterfeit : so that what I have here translated, is insert'd not as an authority, but as the opinion of an unknown writer ; and I lay no other weight upon it.



O still the same Ulysses ! she rejoin'd,  
 In useful craft successfully refin'd ?  
 Artful in speech, in action, and in mind !  
 Suffic'd it not, that thy long labours past  
 Secure thou seest thy native shore at last ?  
 But this to me ? who, like thyself, excell  
 In arts of counsel, and dissembling well.

335

v. 338. ——— *Who, like thyself, excell*

*In arts of counsel, and dissembling well.]*

It has been objected against Homer, that he gives a degree of dissimulation to his hero, unworthy of a brave man, and an ingenuous disposition: here we have a full vindication of Ulysses from the mouth of the goddess of wisdom; he uses only a prudent dissimulation; he is *ἐσχιυόος*, which we may almost literally render, *master of a great presence of mind*: that is, upon every emergency he finds an immediate resource to extricate himself from it. If his dissimulation had been vicious, it would have been an absurdity to have introduced Minerva praising and recommending it; on the contrary, all disguise which consists with innocence and prudence, is so far from being mean, that it really is a praise to a person who uses it. I speak not of common life, or as if men should always act under a mask, and in disguise; that indeed betrays design and insincerity: I only recommend it as an instance how men should behave in the article of danger, when it is as respectable to elude an enemy as to defeat one.

—— *-dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirit.*

This is the character of Ulysses, who uses only such artifice as is suggested by wisdom, such as turns to his benefit in all extremities, such as Minerva may boast to practise without a rival among the gods, as much as Ulysses among mankind. In short, this dissimulation in war may be called stratagem and conduct, in other exigencies address and dexterity; nor is Ulysses criminal, but artful.

To me, whose wit exceeds the Pow'rs divine,  
 No less than mortals are surpass'd by thine.  
 Know'st thou not me? who made thy life my care,  
 Thro' ten years wandring, and thro' ten years war;  
 Who taught thee arts, Alcinous to persuade,  
 To raise his wonder, and engage his aid:  
 And now appear thy treasures to protect,  
 Conceal thy person, thy designs direct,  
 And tell what more thou must from fate expect.  
 Domestic woes far heavier to be born!  
 The pride of fools, and slaves insulting scorn.  
 But thou be silent, nor reveal thy state:  
 Yield to the force of unresisted fate,  
 And bear unmov'd the wrongs of base mankind,  
 The last, and hardest conquest of the mind.

Goddesses of wisdom! Ithacus replies,  
 He who discerns thee must be truly wise,  
 So seldom view'd, and ever in disguise!  
 When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs,  
 Against proud Ilion's well defended tow'rs;  
 Ulysses was thy care, celestial maid!  
 Grac'd with thy sight and favour'd with thy aid.  
 But when the Trojan piles in ashes lay,  
 And bound for Greece we plow'd the wat'ry way;  
 Our fleet dispers'd and driv'n from coast to coast,  
 Thy sacred presence from that hour I lost:  
 'Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,  
 And heard thy counsels on Phæacia's shore.  
 But, by th' almighty author of thy race,  
 Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place?

For much I fear, long tracts of land and sea 370

Divide this coast from distant Ithaca ;

The sweet delusion kindly you impose,

To sooth my hopes, and mitigate my woes.

Thus he. The blue ey'd goddess thus replies.

How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise ! 375

Who vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring show,

And taste not half the bliss the gods bestow,

The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,

And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.

Others, long absent from their native place, 380

Strait seek their home, and fly with eager pace

To their wives arms, and childrens dear embrace.

Not thus Ulysses : he decrees to prove

His subjects faith, and queen's suspected love ;

Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years, 385

And wastes the days in grief, the nights in tears.

v. 369. *Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place ?*

It may appear somewhat extraordinary that Ulysses should not believe Minerva, who had already assured him that he was landed in his own country : but two answers may be given to this objection, and his doubts may be ascribed to his having lost the knowledge of it through his long absence, for that is the veil which is cast before his eyes ; or to the nature of man in general, who when he desires any thing vehemently scarce believes himself in the possession of it, even while he possesses it. Nothing is more frequent than such expressions upon the theatre, and in the transport of an unexpected happiness, we are apt to think it a delusion ; from hence the fears of Ulysses arise, and they are to be imputed to his vehement love of his country, not to his unbelief.

But Pallas knew (thy friends and navy lost)  
 Once more 'twas given thee to behold thy coast:  
 Yet how could I with adverse fate engage,  
 And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage? 390  
 Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore  
 The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.  
 Behold the port of Phorcys! fenc'd around  
 With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd.  
 Behold the gloomy grot! whose cool recess 395  
 Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas:  
 Whose now-neglected altars, in thy reign,  
 Blush'd with the blood of sheep and oxen slain.  
 Behold! where Neritus the clouds divides,  
 And shakes the waving forests on his sides. 400  
 So spake the goddess, and the prospect clear'd,  
 The mists dispers'd, and all the coast appear'd.  
 The king with joy confess'd his place of birth,  
 And on his knees salutes his mother earth:  
 Then with his suppliant hands upheld in air 405  
 Thus to the sea-green sisters sends his pray'r.  
 All hail! ye virgin daughters of the main!  
 Ye streams, beyond my hopes beheld again!  
 To you once more your own Ulysses bows;  
 Attend his transports, and receive his vows! 410  
 If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown  
 The growing virtues of my youthful son,  
 To you shall rites divine be ever paid,  
 And grateful off'rings on your altars laid.  
 Then thus Minerva. From that anxious breast 415  
 Dismiss those cares, and leave to heav'n the rest.

Our task be now thy treasur'd stores to save,  
 Deep in the close recesses of the cave :  
 Then future means consult——she spoke, and trod  
 The shady grot, that bright'ned with the god. 425  
 The closest caverns of the grot she sought ;  
 The gold, the brass, the robes, Ulysses brought ;  
 These in the secret gloom the chief dispos'd :  
 The entrance with a rock the goddess clos'd.

Now seated in the olive's sacred shade 435  
 Confer the hero and the martial maid.  
 The goddess of the azure eyes began :  
 Son of Laertes ! much experienc'd man !  
 The suitor-train thy earliest care demand,  
 Of that luxurious race to rid the land : 430  
 Three years thy house their lawless rule has seen,  
 And proud addresses to the matchless queen.  
 But she thy absence mourns from day to day,  
 And inly bleeds, and silent wastes away :  
 Elusive of the bridal hour, she gives 435  
 Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.

To this Ulysses. Oh celestial maid !  
 Prais'd be thy counsel, and thy timely aid :  
 Else had I seen my native walls in vain,  
 Like great Atrides, just restor'd and slain. 440  
 Vouchsafe the means of vengeance to debate,  
 And plan with all thy arts the scene of fate.  
 Then, then be present, and my soul inspire,  
 As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n-built walls in fire.  
 Though leagu'd against me hundred heroes stand, 445  
 Hundreds shall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.



She answer'd: In the dreadful day of fight  
 Know, I am with thee, strong in all my might.  
 If thou but equal to thyself be found,  
 What gasping numbers then shall press the ground ! 450  
 What human victims stain the feastful floor !  
 How wide the pavements float with guilty gore !

v. 445. *Though leagu'd against me hundreds, etc.*] Nothing is more judicious than this conduct in Homer ; the whole number of suitors are to be slain by a few hands, which might shock our reason if it were related suddenly, without any preparation to shew us the probability of it: this is the intent of Homer in this and various other places of the Odyssey: he softens the relation, and reconciles us to it by such insertions, before he describes that great event. The ancients (says Eustathius) would not here allow Ulysses to speak hyperbolically; he is that hero whom we have already seen in the Iliad resist whole bands of Trojans, when the Greeks were repulsed, where he slew numbers of enemies, and sustained their assaults till he was disengaged by Ajax. Besides, there is an excellent moral in what Ulysses speaks; it contains this certain truth, (adds Dacier) that a man assisted by heaven, has not only nothing to fear, but is assured to triumph over all the united powers of mankind.

v. 452. *How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!*] The words in the Greek are ἀσπιτον ὕδας, which Eustathius imagines to signify the land of Ithaca: for the hall even of a palace is too narrow to be stiled immense, or ἀσπιτον. But this contradicts the matter of fact, as appears from the place where the suitors were slain, which was not in the fields of Ithaca, but in the palace of Ulysses: ἀσπιτον really signifies large or spacious; and a palace that could entertain at one time so great a number of suitors might be called vast or ἀσπιτος, which Hesychius interprets by λίαν πάλυς, μέγας. Dacier.

It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,  
 And secret walk unknown to mortal eyes.  
 For this my hand shall wither ev'ry grace,  
 And ev'ry elegance of form and face,  
 O'er thy smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread,  
 Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,  
 Disfigure ev'ry limb with coarse attire,  
 And in thy eyes extinguish all the fire;  
 Add all the wants and the decays of life,  
 Estrange thee from thy own, thy son, thy wife;  
 From the loath'd object every sight shall turn,  
 And the blind suitors their destruction scorn.

455

460

465

470

Go first the master of thy herds to find,  
 True to his charge, a loyal swain and kind:  
 For thee he sighs; and to the royal heir  
 And chaste Penelope extends his care.  
 At the Coracian rock he now resides,  
 Where Arethusa's fable water glides;

v. 465. *Go first the master of thy herds to find.*]

There are many reasons why this injunction was necessary: the hero of a poem ought never to be out of sight, never out of action: neither is Ulysses idle in this recess, he goes thither to acquaint himself with the condition of his affairs, both public and domestic: he there lays the plan for the destruction of the suitors, enquires after their numbers, and the state of Penelope and Telemachus. Besides, he here resides in full security and privacy, 'till he has prepared all things for the execution of the great event of the whole Odyssey.

v. 469. *Coracian rock.*] This rock was so called from a young man whose name was Corax, who in pursuit of an hare fell from it and broke his neck: Arethusa his

The fable water, and the copious mast  
 Swell the fat herd; luxuriant, large repast!  
 With him, rest peaceful in the rural cell,  
 And all you ask his faithful tongue shall tell.  
 Me into other realms my cares convey, 475  
 To Sparta, still with female beauty gay:  
 For know, to Sparta, thy lov'd offspring came,  
 To learn thy fortunes from the voice of fame.

At this the father, with a father's care.  
 Must he too suffer: he, oh goddess! bear 480  
 Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched share?  
 Through the wild ocean plow the dang'rous way,  
 And leave his fortunes and his house a prey?  
 Why would'st not thou, oh all-enlighten'd mind!  
 Inform him certain, and protect him, kind? 485

To whom Minerva. Be thy soul at rest;  
 And know, whatever heav'n ordains, is best.  
 To fame I sent him to acquire renown:  
 To other regions is his virtue known.  
 Secure he sits, near great Atides plac'd; 490  
 With friendships strengthen'd, and with honours grac'd.  
 But lo! an ambush waits his passage o'er;  
 Fierce foes insidious intercept the shore:  
 In vain! far sooner all the murd'rous brood  
 This injur'd land shall fatten with their blood. 495

She spake, then touch'd him with her pow'rful wand,  
 The skin shrunk up, and wither'd at her hand:

mother hearing of the accident hanged herself by the fountain, which afterwards took its name from her, and was called Arethusa. Eustathius.

A swift old age o'er all his members spread ;  
 A sudden frost was sprinkled on his head ;  
 Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball shin'd 500  
 The glance divine, forth beaming from the mind.  
 His robe, which spots indelible besmear,  
 In rags dishonest flutters with the air :  
 A stag's torn hide is lapt around his reins ;  
 A rugged staff his trembling hand sustains ; 505  
 And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,  
 Wide patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.  
 To look'd the chief, so mov'd! to mortal eyes  
 Object uncouth ! a man of miseries !

v. 502. *His robe, which spots indelible besmear, etc.*]  
 I doubt not but Homer draws after the life. We have the  
 whole equipage and accoutrements of a beggar, yet so  
 drawn by Homer, as even to retain a nobleness and dig-  
 nity; let any person read the description, and he will be  
 convinced of it; what can be more lofty and sonorous  
 than this verse ?

Γαυαλία, ῥυτίωντα κακῷ μίμορυμένῃ καπνῷ.

It is no humility to say that a translator must fall short of  
 the original in such passages; the Greek language has  
 words noble and sounding to express all subjects, which  
 are wanting in our tongue; all that is to be expected is to  
 keep the diction from appearing mean or ridiculous. They  
 are greatly mistaken who impute this disguise of Ulysses in  
 the form of a beggar, as a fault to Homer; there is no-  
 thing either absurd or mean in it; for the way to make a  
 thing undiscoverable, is to dress him as unlike himself as  
 possible. David counterfeited madness, as Ulysses pover-  
 ty, and neither of them ought to lye under any imputati-  
 on; it is easy to vindicate Homer, from the disguise of the  
 greatest persons and generals in history, upon the like e-  
 mergencies; but there is no occasion for it.

While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air 510  
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.

v. 510. *While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,  
To Sparta flies———*]

Homer is now preparing to turn the relation from Ulysses to Telemachus, whom we left at Sparta with Menelaus in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*. He has been long out of sight, and we have heard none of his actions; Telemachus is not the hero of the poem: he is only an under-agent, and consequently the poet was at liberty to omit any or all of his adventures, unless such as have a necessary connection with the story of the *Odyssey*, and contribute to the re-establishment of Ulysses; by this method likewise Homer gives variety to his poetry, and breaks or gathers up the thread of it, as it tends to diversify the whole: we may consider an epic poem as a spacious garden, where there are to be different walks and views, lest the eye should be tired with too great a regularity and uniformity: the chief avenue ought to be the most ample and noble, but there should be by-walks to retire into sometimes for our ease and refreshment. The poet thus gives us several openings to draw us forward with pleasure; and though the great event of the poem be chiefly in view, yet he sometimes leads us aside into other short passages which end in it again, and bring us with pleasure to the conclusion of it. Thus, for instance, Homer begins with the story of Telemachus and the suitors; then he leaves them a while, and more largely lays before us the adventures of Ulysses, the hero of his poem; when he has satisfied the curiosity of the reader by a full narration of what belongs to him, he returns to Telemachus and the suitors; at length he unites the two stories, and proceeds directly to the end of the *Odyssey*. Thus, all the collateral and indirect passages fall into one center and main point of view. The eye is continually entertained with some new object, and we pass on from incident to incident, not only without fatigue, but with pleasure and admiration.



THE  
ODYSSEY.  
BOOK XIV.

THE ARGUMENT. *He*

The conversation with Eumæus.

*Ulysses arrives in disguise at the house of Eumæus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmost hospitality. The several discourses of that faithful old servant, with the feigned story told by Ulysses to conceal himself, and other conversations on various subjects, take up this entire book.*

**B**UT he, deep-musing, o'er the mountains stray'd  
Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade,  
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,  
With cliffs and nodding forests over-hung.

We see in this book the character of a faithful, wise, benevolent old man in Eumæus; one happily innocent, unambitious, and wholly employed in rural affairs. The whole interview between Ulysses and Eumæus has fallen into ridicule; Eumæus has been judged to be of the same rank and condition with our modern swine-herds. But herds and flocks were then kept and attended by the sons of kings; thus Paris watched the flocks of Priam in the groves of Ida, and the same is said of many of the heroes in the Iliad; these offices were places of dignity, and filled by persons of birth; and such was Eumæus, descended from a prince, named Ctefius: thus the master of the horse is a post of honour in modern ages.

It is in poetry, as in painting; where the artist does

Eumæus at his Sylvan lodge he sought,  
A faithful servant, and without a fault.

not confine himself to draw only gods or heroes, palaces and princes; but he frequently employs his pencil in representing landscapes, rural scenes, groves, cottages, and shepherds tending their flocks.

There is a passage in monsieur Boileau's reflections upon Longinus, which fully vindicates all the places of Homer that have been censured as low and too familiar. 'There is nothing (observes that author) that more disgraces a composition than the use of vulgar words: a mean thought, expressed in noble terms, is generally more taking than a noble thought debased by mean terms: the reason is, every person cannot judge of the justness and strength of a thought, but there are very few, especially in living languages, who are not shocked at mean words: and yet almost all writers fall into this fault. Longinus accuses Herodotus, the most polite of all the Greek historians, of this defect; and Livy, Sallust, and Virgil have fallen under the same imputation. Is it not then very surprizing that no reproach upon this account has fallen upon Homer? especially though he has composed two large poems, and though no author has descended more frequently into the detail of little particularities; yet he never uses terms which are not noble, or if he uses humble words or phrases, it is with so much art, that as Dionysius Halicarnassus observes, they become noble and harmonious. We may learn from hence the ignorance of those modern critics, who judge of the Greek without the knowledge of it; and having never read Homer but in low and inelegant translations, impute the meannesses of the translator to the poet. Besides, the words of different languages are not exactly correspondent, and it often happens that an expression which is noble in the Greek cannot be rendered in a version but by words that are either mean in the sound

Ulysses found him, busied as he sat  
Before the threshold of his rustic gate ;

for usage. Thus *asus*, and *asinus* in Latin, are mean to the least degree ; though *ἄνος* in the Greek be used in the most magnificent descriptions, and has nothing mean in it ; in like manner the terms Hogherd and Cowkeeper are not to be used in our poetry ; but there are no finer words in the Greek language than βέκολος and σὺβάτης : and Virgil, who entitles his Eclogues Bucolics in the Roman tongue, would have been ashamed to have called them in our language the Dialogues of Cowkeepers.

Homer himself convinces us of the truth of this observation ; nay, one would imagine that he intended industriously to force it upon our notice ; for he frequently calls Eumæus Ὀρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, or Prince of men ; and his common epithet is θεῖος or δῖος ὑφ' ὧς. Homer would not have applied these appellations to him, if he had not been a person of dignity ; it being the same title that he bestows upon his greatest heroes, Ulysses or Achilles.

Book XIV. But he, deep-musing, o'er the mountains stray'd ]  
I shall transcribe the observation of Dionysius of Halicarnassus upon the first verses in this book : the same method, remarks that author, makes both prose and verse beautiful ; which consists in these three things, the judicious coaptation and ranging of the words, the position of the members and parts of the verse, and the various measure of the periods. Whoever would write elegantly, must have regard to the different turn and juncture of every period, there must be proper distances and pauses ; every verse must be a complete sentence, but broken and interrupted, and the parts made unequal, some longer, some shorter to give a variety of cadence to it. Neither the position of the parts of the verse, nor the length, ought to be alike. This is absolutely necessary : for the epic or heroic verse is of a fixed determinate length, and we cannot,

Around the mansion in a circle shone

A rural portico of rugged stone.

as in the lyric, make one longer, and another shorter therefore to avoid an identity of cadence, and a perpetual return of the same periods, it is requisite to contrail lengthen, and interrupt the pause and structure of the members of the verses, to create an harmonious inequality and out of a fixed number of syllables to raise a perpetual diversity. For instance,

Ἄυτὰρ ὁ' ἐκ λιμένος προσέειπε τρηχέϊαν ἀταρπὸν.

Here one line makes one sentence ; the next is shorter,

Χῶρόν ἂν' ὑλήϊντα——

The next is still shorter,

——δι' ἀκρίας——

The next sentence composes two hemistichs,

——Ἥ ἑὶ Ἀθήνη  
Πίεφραδι δῖον ὑφορβὸν——

and is entirely unlike any of the preceding periods.

——Ἄ ὅι βιότοιο μάλισα  
Κήδετο οἰκῆων ὅς κτήσατο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

Here again the sentence is not finished with the former verse, but breaks into the fourth line ; and lest we should be out of breath, with the length of the sentence, the period and the verse conclude together at the end of it.

Then Homer begins a new sentence, and makes it pause differently from any of the former.

Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐνὶ προδρόμῳ εὖρ' ἤμεινον——

Then he adds,

In absence of his lord, with honest toil  
 His own industrious hands had rais'd the pile)  
 The wall was stone from neighb'ring quarries born,  
 Encircled with a fence of native thorn,  
 And strong with pales, by many a weary stroke 15  
 Of stubborn labour hewn from heart of oak;

————— Ἐνθαὶ οἱ αὐλὴν  
 Ὑψηλὴν δέδμητο —————

This is perfectly unequal to the foregoing period, and the  
 pause of the sentence is carried forward into the second  
 verse; and what then follows is neither distinguished by  
 the pauses nor parts periodically, but almost at every word  
 there is a stop.

————— Περισκέπῳ ἐνὶ χῶρῳ,  
 Καλῆτι, μεγαλῆτι.

No doubt but Homer was a perfect master of numbers;  
 man can no more be a poet than a musician, without a  
 good ear, as we usually express it. It is true, that versi-  
 fication is but the mechanism of poetry, but it sets off  
 good sense to the best advantage, it is a colouring that en-  
 richens the portrait, and makes even a beauty more agree-  
 able.

I will conclude this note with observing what Mr. Dry-  
 den says of these two lines from Cowper's hill.

*Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull,  
 Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.*

There are few (says he) who make verses, that have  
 observed the sweetness of these lines, and fewer who  
 can find the reason of it. But I believe no one will be  
 a loss to solve the difficulty who considers this obser-  
 vation of Dionysius: and I doubt not but the chief sweet-



Frequent and thick. Within the space were rear'd  
 Twelve ample cells, the lodgments of his herd.  
 Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd ;  
 The males without (a smaller race) remain'd ;  
 Doom'd to supply the suitors wasteful feast,  
 A stock by daily luxury decreas'd ;  
 Now scarce four hundred left. These to defend,  
 Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.  
 Here sat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd  
 To form strong bulkins of well-season'd hyde.

ness arises from the judicious and harmonious pauses of the several periods of the verses ; not to mention the happy choice of the words, in which there is scarce one rough consonant, many liquids, and those liquids softened with a multitude of vowels.

v. 25. *Here sat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd, etc.*

I doubt not but this employment of Eumæus has been another cause of the mean character that has been form'd of his condition : but this mistake arises from our judging of the dignity of men from the employments they followed three thousand years past, by the notions we have of those employments at present ; and because they are now only the occupation of the vulgar we imagine that they were so formerly : kings and princes in the earlier ages of the world laboured in arts and occupations, and were above nothing that tended to promote the conveniencies of life ; they performed that with their own hands, which we now perform by those of our servants : if this were not so the cookery of Achilles in the Iliad would equally disparage that hero, as this employment would disgrace Eumæus in the Odyssey : arts were then in their infancy, and were honourable to the practisers : thus Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, as skilfully as a shipwright.

Besides, even at this day arts are in high esteem in the

Of four assistants who his labour share,

Three now were absent on the rural care;

20

oriental world, and are practised by the greatest person-  
ages. Every man in Turkey is of some trade; sultan Ach-  
met was a maker of ivory rings, which the Turks wear  
upon their thumbs when they shoot their arrows, and in  
his occupation he work'd several hours daily; and another  
of their emperors was deposed, because he refused to  
work in his occupation.

25

It must be confessed that our translations have contri-  
buted to give those who are unacquainted with the Greek,  
mean idea of Eumæus. This place is thus render'd by  
two of his translators.

*Himself there sat ordering a pair of brogues,*

*Of a py'd bullock's skin——*

*Himself was leather to his feet applying,*

*Made of a good cow-hide well coloured.*

Whereas Homer is as lofty and harmonious, as these are  
flat and inelegant.

Ἄντ' οὐδ' ἀμφὶ ποδῶν τοῖς ἀράχαια τίθει

Τάμνον δῖονα βάλον, ἰύχευς.

It is true, a translator in such places as these has an  
ard task; a language like the Greek, which is always  
flowing, musical and sonorous, is very difficult to be imita-  
ed in other tongues, especially where the corresponding  
words are not equally significant and graceful.

In short, the reader is to consider this whole description  
as a true picture of antient life; and then he will not fail  
of the pleasure of knowing how the great men of antient  
times passed their lives, and how those heroes, who per-  
formed such noble parts on the public stage of life, acted  
in private when withdrawn from notice and observation.  
Those ages retained an universal simplicity of manners:

The fourth drove victims to the suitor-train :

But he, of antient faith, a simple swain,  
Sigh'd, while he furnish'd the luxurious board,  
And wearied heav'n with wishes for his lord:

Soon as Ulysses near th' inclosure drew,  
With open mouths the furious mastives flew :  
Down sat the sage ; and cautious to withstand,  
Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.

Telemachus and Eumæus have both dogs for their attendants ; nay, and in later times, before luxury prevailed among the Romans, we read of a dictator brought from the plough, to lead the bravest soldiers in the world to conquer it.

v. 35. *Down sat the sage ; and cautious to withstand  
Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.*

Homer has been censured for representing his hero unworthily : is it probable that he who had met whole armies in battle, should now throw away his staff out of fear of a dog ? that he should abandon his defence by casting himself on the ground and leave himself to his mercy ? But Eustathius fully vindicates Ulysses. It is a natural defence to avert the fury of a dog, to cast away our weapons, to show that we intend him no violence. Pliny has the like observation in the eight book of his natural history : *impetus canum & sævitia mitigatur ab homine, humi confidenter*.

All that Homer says of the dogs, is imitated by Theocritus, Idyll. 25. v. 68.

Θεοπίσιον δ' υλαινέες επίδραμον ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος  
Τὴς μιν ὄγε λάεσσιν ἀπὸ χθονὸς ἄσπον ἀέρας  
Φεύγεμεν ἅψ' ὀπίσω δειδίσσεται, etc.

What Homer speaks of Ulysses. Theocritus applies

Sudden, the master runs ; aloud he calls ;  
 And from his hasty hand the leather falls ;  
 With show'rs of stones he drives them far away ;  
 The scatt'ring dogs around at distance bay. 40  
 Unhappy stranger ! (thus the faithful swain  
 Began with accent gracious and humane)

Hercules ; a demonstration that he thought it to be a picture of nature, and therefore inserted it in that heroic idyllium.

v. 37. *Sudden, the master runs, etc.*] This is thought to be an adventure that really happened to the poet himself ; it is related in the life of Homer ascribed to Herodotus. Thestorides having persuaded Homer to permit him to transcribe his verses, he immediately removed to Chios, and proclaimed himself the author : Homer being informed of it, set sail for Chios, and landing near it, he was in danger of being torn in pieces by the dogs of Glaucus, who protected him, and received him hospitably ; the poet in return laboured to reward his kindness, by relating to him the most curious of his adventures that had happened in the course of his voyages. When therefore (adds Dacier) we see Ulysses entertained by Eumæus, we have the satisfaction of imagining we see Homer himself in discourse with his courteous friend Glaucus.

v. 41. — *Thus the faithful swain, etc.*] The words in the Greek are *διος ὑποπότις*, literally rendered, *the divine swineherd*, which are burlesque in modern languages, and would have been no less in Greek, if the person of Eumæus had not been honourable, and his office a station of dignity : for the sole reason why such a translation would now be ridiculous, is because such employments are now fallen into contempt. Let any person ask this question, would Homer have applied the epithet *divine* to a modern swineherd ? if he would not, it is an evidence that Eumæus was a man of consequence, and his post a place

What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate  
 Thy rev'rend age had met a shameful fate?  
 Enough of woes already have I known;  
 Enough my master's sorrows, and my own.  
 While here, (ungrateful task!) his herds I feed,  
 Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed;  
 Perhaps supported at another's board,  
 Far from his country roams my hapless lord!  
 Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,  
 Now cover'd with th' eternal shade of death!

But enter this my homely roof, and see  
 Our woods not void of hospitality.  
 Then tell me whence thou art? and what the share  
 Of woes and wand'rings thou wert born to bear?

He said, and seconding the kind request,  
 With friendly step precedes his unknown guest.

of honour; otherwise Homer would have been guilty of burlesquing his own poetry.

Dacier very well remarks, that the words Eumæus here speaks, and indeed his whole conversation, shew him to be a person of a good education, and of noble and pious sentiments; he discovers a natural and flowing eloquence, and appears to be a man of great humanity and wisdom.

There is a peculiarity in Homer's manner of apostrophizing Eumæus, and speaking of him in the second person; it is generally applied by that poet only to men of account and distinction, and by it the poet, as it were, addresses them with respect; thus in the Iliad he introduces Menelaus.

Οὐδὲ τίθεν, Μενέλαε, θεοὶ ἐλάθοντο.

—— Τόν δὲ προσέφη Πατρόκλος.

This enlivens the diction, and awakens the attention of



A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,  
 And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed. 60  
 Joy touch'd the hero's tender soul, to find  
 So just reception from a heart so kind :  
 And oh, ye gods ! with all your blessings grace  
 (He thus broke forth) this friend of human race !  
 The swain replied. It never was our guise 65  
 To slight the poor, or aught humane despise.  
 For Jove unfolds our hospitable door,  
 'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.

the reader. Eustathius observes that Eumæus is the only person of whom Homer thus speaks in the whole Odyssey: no doubt (continues that author) he does it out of love of this benevolent old servant of Ulysses; and to honour and distinguish his fidelity.

v. 66. *To slight the poor, or aught humane despise.*

*For Jove unfolds our hospitable door,*

*'Tis Jove that sends the stranger, and the poor.]*

This passage contains an admirable lecture of morality, and humanity. The person who best understood the beauty of it, and best explained the precepts it comprehends, was Epictetus, from whom Monsieur Dacier furnishes us with this explication from Arrian: 'Keep (says that author) continually in thy memory, what Eumæus speaks in Homer to the disguised Ulysses.' *O friend, it is unlawful to despise the stranger; speak thus to thy brother, father, and neighbour: it is my duty to use you with benevolence, though your circumstances were meaner than they are; for you come from God.* Here we see Epictetus borrowing his morality from Homer; and philosophy embellished with the ornaments of poetry. Indeed there is scarce any writer of name among the ancients that has not been obliged to Homer, whether moralists, poets, philosophers, or legislators.

Little alas ! is all the good I can,  
 A man oppress'd, dependant, yet a man:  
 Accept such treatment as a swain affords,  
 Slave to the insolence of youthful lords !  
 Far hence is by unequal gods remov'd  
 That man of bounties, loving and belov'd !  
 To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd,  
 And more, had fate allow'd, had been bestow'd :  
 But fate condemn'd him to a foreign shore !  
 Much have I sorrow'd, but my master more.

v. 75. *To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd,  
 And more, had fate allow'd*———]

This passage has been greatly mistaken by almost all who have translated Homer: the words at first view seem to imply that Ulysses had given Eumæus a wife, a house, and an inheritance: but this is not the meaning. The words are thus to be rendered, 'Ulysses (says Eumæus) greatly loved me, and gave me a possession, and such things as an indulgent master gives to a faithful servant; namely a wife, inheritance, and an house:' these gifts are to be applied to *Ἀναξ ἔυθυμος*, and not to Ulysses, and the sentence means that it is the custom of good kings in this manner to reward their faithful servants. It is very evident from Homer, that Ulysses had not yet given a wife to Eumæus, for he promises him and Philætiſtus all the rewards, lib. 21. of the *Odyssey*.

Ἄξομαι ἀμφοτέροις ἀλόχῃς, καὶ κτήματ' ὅπασα,  
 Οἰκία τ' ἐγὼς ἐμῷ τιτυγμένα, καὶ μοι ἱππεῖα  
 Τηλεμάχῃς ἐτάρω τε, καοσιγνήτῃ τε ἴσιδον.

It appears therefore that Eumæus was not married, and therefore this whole period is to be applied to the word *Ἀναξ*, and not to Ulysses. Eustathius.

How cold he lies, to death's embrace resign'd:  
 Perish Helen! perish all her kind!  
 For whose curs'd cause, in Agamemnon's name,  
 He trod so fatally the paths of fame.  
 His vest succinct then girding round his waste,  
 For rush'd the swain with hospitable haste,  
 Strait to the lodgment of his herd he run,  
 Where the fat porkers slept beneath the sun;  
 Of two, his cutlafs launch'd the spouting blood;  
 These quarter'd, sing'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,  
 All hasty on the hissing coals he threw;  
 And smoaking back the tasteful viands drew,  
 Roachers and all; then on the board display'd  
 The ready meal before Ulysses laid;  
 With flour imbrown'd next mingled wine yet new,  
 And luscious as the bees nectareous dew:  
 Then fat companion of the friendly feast,  
 With open look, and thus bespoke his guest.

I will only add that in the above-mentioned verses Ulysses promises that Eumæus shall be the companion and brother of Telemachus; an instance that he was not a vulgar person whom Ulysses thus honours, by making him allied to the royal family.

v. 93. *With flour imbrown'd.*] We find here a custom of antiquity: this flour was made of parched corn; when the ancients fed upon any thing that had not been offered in sacrifice, they sprinkled it with flour, which was used instead of the hallowed barley, with which they consecrated their victims. I doubt not (since some honours were paid to the gods in all feasts) but that this sprinkling of flour by Eumæus was an act of religion. Dacier.

Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,  
 Such foods as falls to simple servants share :  
 The best our lords consume ; those thoughtless peers,  
 Rich without bounty, guilty without fears !  
 Yet sure the gods their impious acts detest,  
 And honour justice and the righteous breast.  
 Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,  
 The foes of peace, and scourges of mankind,  
 To whom offending men are made a prey  
 When Jove in vengeance gives a land away ;  
 Ev'n these, when of their ill got spoils possess'd,  
 Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast ;  
 Some voice of God close whisp'ring from within,  
 ' Wretch ! this is villany, and this is sin.'  
 But these, no doubt, some oracle exalts,  
 That tells, the great Ulysses is no more.  
 Hence springs their confidence, and from our sighs  
 Their rapine strengthens, and their riots rise :  
 Constant as Jove the night and day bestows,  
 Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.  
 None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign  
 O'er the fair islands of the neighb'ring main,  
 Nor all the monarchs whose far-dreaded sway  
 The wide extended continents obey :  
 First on the main land, of Ulysses' breed  
 Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed ;

v. 122. *Twelve herds, twelve flocks, etc.*] I have already remarked that Ulysses was a wealthy king, and this place is an instance of it. He is master of twelve herds of oxen which probably amounted to fourteen thousand four

many stalls for shaggy goats are rear'd;  
 many lodgments for the tusked herd;  
 whose foreign keepers guard: and here are seen 125  
 twelve herds of goats that graze our utmost green;  
 whose native pastors is their charge assign'd,  
 And mine the care to feed the bristly kind:  
 Each day the fattest bleeds of either herd,  
 As to the suitors wasteful board preferr'd. 130  
 Thus he, benevolent; his unknown guest  
 With hunger keen devours the fav'ry feast;  
 While schemes of vengeance ripen in his breast.  
 Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,  
 Eumæus pours on high the purple tide; 135

hundred head; for if we count the herds by the same way  
 of computation as the droves of swine, they will make that  
 number, each drove consisting of twelve hundred: for  
 Homer mentions but three hundred and sixty boars,  
 and he tells us the reason why they were inferior to the  
 oxen was because of the luxury of the suitors. If this  
 be allowed, then he had likewise the same number of sheep  
 and as many hogs: for Eumæus had the charge only of  
 one herd; eleven more were under the care of other offi-  
 cers: Ulysses likewise had thirteen thousand two hundred  
 goats. This will appear to be a true calculation from the  
 words of Homer, who tells us that twenty of the greatest  
 princes of the age were not so wealthy as Ulysses.

The old poets and historians to express a person of great  
 wealth gave him the epithet of πολυμήλαν, πολυαγρίαν, or  
 πολύκις; that is, a person that had a great number  
 of sheep or cattle, or a person of great wealth: this is  
 likewise evident from the holy scriptures: David had his  
 shepherds, like Ulysses, to attend his flocks and herds: thus  
 Chron. xxviii. Jehonathan was set over his treasures



The king with smiling looks his joy exprest,  
And thus the kind inviting host address'd.

Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,  
So rich, so potent, whom you stile your lord?  
Late with such affluence and possessions blest,  
And now in honour's glorious bed at rest.  
Whoever was the warrior, he must be  
To fame no stranger, nor perhaps to me;  
Who (so the gods, and so the fates ordain'd)  
Have wander'd many a sea, and many a land.

Small is the faith, the prince and queen ascribe  
(Reply'd Eumæus) to the wand'ring tribe.  
For needy strangers still to flatt'ry fly,  
And want too oft betrays the tongue to lye.  
Each vagrant traveller that touches here,  
Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,  
To dear remembrance makes his image rise,  
And calls the springing sorrows from her eyes.

in the field, cities and villages; Shimei over his vineyard  
Zabdi over his wines; Baal-hanan over his olive tree  
and Joash over his oil: he had herdsmen that had charge  
over his cattle, sheep, camels and asses. It was by cattle  
that the antient kings enriched themselves from the earli-  
est ages: thus no less a person than Pharaoh, a powerful  
king of Ægypt, gave Joseph leave to appoint his brethren  
to be rulers over his cattle; and we read in all the Greek  
poets, that the wealth of kings originally consisted in herds  
and flocks. They lose much of the pleasure of Homer  
who read him only as a poet: he gives an exact image of  
antient life, their manners, customs, laws, and politics;  
and it must double our satisfaction, when we consider that  
in reading Homer we are reading the most antient author  
in the world, except the great lawgiver Moses.

Such thou may'st be. But he whose name you crave  
 Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave, 155  
 Or food for fish, or dogs, his reliques ly;  
 Or torn by birds are scatter'd through the sky.  
 So perish'd he : and left (for ever lost)  
 Much woe to all, but sure to me the most.  
 No mild a master never shall I find : 160  
 Less dear the parents whom I left behind,  
 Less soft my mother, less my father kind.  
 Not with such transport would my eyes run o'er,  
 Again to hail them in their native shore,  
 As lov'd Ulysses once more to embrace, 165  
 Restor'd and breathing in his natal place.  
 That name, for ever dread, yet ever dear,  
 Ev'n in his absence I pronounce with fear ;

v. 167. *That name for ever dread, etc.*] Eustathius excellently explains the sentiment of Eumæus, which is full of tenderness and humanity. I will not call Ulysses, cries Eumæus, by the name of Ulysses, for from strangers he receives that appellation ; I will not call him my master, for as such he never was towards me ; I will then call him brother, for he always used me with the tenderness of a brother. *Ἠθεός*, properly signifies an elder brother.

What I would further observe is the wonderful art of Homer in exalting the character of his hero : he is the bravest and the best of men, good in every circumstance of life : valiant in war, patient in adversity, a kind father, husband, and master, as well as a mild and merciful king : by this conduct the poet deeply engages our affections in the good or ill fortune of the hero : he makes himself master of our passions, and we rejoice or grieve at his success or calamity through the whole Odyssey.

In that respect he bears a prince's part,  
But lives a very brother in my heart. 170

Thus spoke the faithful swain, and thus rejoined  
The master of his grief, the man of patient mind.  
Ulysses, friend ! shall view his old abodes,  
(Distrustful as thou art) nor doubt the gods.  
Nor speak I rashly but with faith averr'd, 175  
And what I speak attesting heav'n has heard.  
If so, a cloak and vesture be my need;  
'Till his return, no title shall I plead,  
Though certain be my news, and great my need.  
Whom want itself can force untruths to tell, 180  
My soul detests him as the gates of hell.

Thou first be witness, hospitable Jove !  
And ev'ry god inspiring social love !  
And witness ev'ry household pow'r that waits  
Guard of these fires, and angel of these gates ! 185  
Ere the next moon increase, or this decay,  
His antient realms Ulysses shall survey,

v. 186. *Ere the next moon increase, or this decay.*  
These verses have been thought to be used ænigmatically  
by Ulysses.

τῷ δ' αὐτῷ λυκάεργος ἔλυσται ἰθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς,

τῷ μὲν Φθινότοτος μῆνις, τῷ δ' ἱσχυροῖο.

In the former verse Eustathius tells us there is a various  
reading, and judges that it ought to be written τῷ δ' αὐτῷ,  
τῷ, and not τῷ δ' αὐτῷ; and it must be allowed that the  
repetition of τῷ gives a greater emphasis to the words, and  
agrees better with the vehemence of the speaker in making  
his asseveration.

in blood and dust each proud oppressor mourn,  
And the lost glories of his house return.

The latter verse in the obvious sense seems to mean, that Ulysses would return in the space of a month, and so Eumæus understood it; but in reality it means the compass of a day. Solon was the first who discovered the latent sense of it, as Plutarch informs us; Solon, says that author, observing the inequality of the months, and that the moon neither agreed with the rising or setting of the sun, but that often in the same day she overtook, and went before it, named that same day *ἐν καιρῷ*, the old and new moon; and allotted that part of the day that preceded the conjunction, to the old moon, and the other part of it to the new; from hence we may judge that he was the first that comprehended the sense of this verse of Homer:

Τῇ μὲν φθίνοντες μῆνας, τῇ δ' ἰσχυρόντες.

Accordingly he named the following day, *the day of the new moon*. Ulysses then means that he will return on the last day of the month, for on that day the moon is both old and new; that is, she finishes one month, and begins another. This is taken from the life of Solon; but whether the obvious sense in which Eumæus is supposed to understand it, or the latent meaning of Solon be preferable, it is submitted to the reader's judgment; I confess I see no occasion to have recourse to that mysterious explication: what Ulysses intended was to certify Eumæus, that Ulysses would assuredly return very speedily; and the verse will have this effect, if it be understood literally and plainly; besides, Ulysses is to continue in an absolute disguise, why then should he endanger a discovery, by using an ambiguous sentence, which might possibly be understood? but if it was so dark that it was utterly unintelligible to Eumæus, then it is used in vain, and needs no ambiguity.

Nor shall that meed be thine, nor ever more 190  
 Shall lov'd Ulysses hail his happy shore,  
 (Reply'd Eumæus :) to the present hour  
 Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.  
 From sad reflection let my soul repose;  
 The name of him awakes a thousand woes. 195  
 But guard him, gods! and to these arms restore!  
 Not his true comfort can desire him more;  
 Not old Laertes, broken with despair;  
 Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.  
 Alas, Telemachus! my sorrows flow 200  
 Afresh for thee, my second cause of woe!  
 Like some fair plant set by a heav'nly hand,  
 He grew, he flourish'd, and he bless'd the land;  
 In all the youth his father's image shin'd,  
 Bright in his person, brighter in his mind. 205  
 What man, or god, deceiv'd his better sense,  
 Far on the swelling seas to wander hence?  
 To distant Pylos hapless is he gone,  
 To seek his father's fate, and find his own!  
 For traitors wait his way, with dire design 210  
 To end at once the great Arceſian line.  
 But let us leave him to their wills above;  
 The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.  
 And now, my venerable guest! declare  
 Your name, your parents, and your native air? 215  
 Sincere from whence begun your course relate,  
 And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?  
 Thus he: and thus (with prompt invention bold)  
 The cautious chief his ready story told.



On dark reserve what better can prevail, 220  
 Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale;  
 Then when two friends, alone, in peaceful place  
 Confer, and wines and cates the table grace;  
 But most, the kind inviter's chearful face?  
 Thus might we sit with social goblets crown'd, 225  
 'Till the whole circle of the year goes round;  
 Not the whole circle of the year would close  
 My long narration of a life of woes.  
 But such was heav'n's high will I know then I came  
 From sacred Crete, and from a fire of fame: 230

v. 229. *Know then I came from sacred Crete.*] This whole narration is a notable instance of that artful dissimulation so remarkable in the character of Ulysses, and an evidence that Homer excellently sustains it through the whole poem; for Ulysses appears to be πολὺτροπος, as he is represented in the first line, throughout the *Odyssey*. This narrative has been both praised and censured by the critics, especially by Rapin; I will lay his observations before the reader.

\* Homer is guilty of verbosity, and of a tedious prolix manner of speaking: he is the greatest talker of all antiquity: the very Greeks, though chargeable with an excess this way above all nations, have reprehended Homer for his intemperance of words; he is ever upon his rehearsals, and not only of the same words, but of the same things, and consequently is in a perpetual circle of repetitions. It is true he always speaks naturally, but then he always speaks too much: his adventures in Ægypt, which he relates to Eumæus, are truly idle impertinent stories, purely for amusement: there is no thread in his discourse, nor does it seem to tend to any proposed end, but exceeds all bounds: that vast fluency of

Castor Hylacides (that name he bore)  
 Belov'd and honour'd in his native shore;  
 Blest in his riches, in his children more.

\* speech, and those mighty overflowings of fancy, make  
 \* him shoot beyond the mark. Hence his draughts are too  
 \* accurate, and leave nothing to be performed by the ima-  
 \* gination of the reader, a fault which (as Cicero ob-  
 \* serves) Apelles found in the antient painters.\* This ob-  
 jection is intended only against the fulness of Homer's ex-  
 pression, but not against the subject of the narration: for  
 Rapin in another place speaking of the beauties of Homer,  
 gives this very story as an instance of his excellency:  
 these are his words:

' I shall say nothing of all the relations which Ulysses  
 \* makes to Eumæus upon his return to his country, and  
 \* his wonderful management to bring about his re-esta-  
 \* blishment; that whole story is dress'd in colours so de-  
 \* cent, and at the same time so noble, that antiquity can  
 \* hardly match any part of the narration.'

If what Rapin remarks in the latter period be true,  
 Homer will easily obtain a pardon for the fault of prolix-  
 ity, imputed to him in the aforementioned objection. For  
 who would be willing to retrench one of the most decent  
 and noble narrations of antiquity, meerly for the length  
 of it? but it may, perhaps, be true that this story is not  
 impertinent, but well suited to carry on the design of U-  
 lysses, and consequently tends to a proposed end: for in  
 this consists the strength of Rapin's objection.

Nothing is more evident than that the whole success of  
 Ulysses depends upon his disguise; a discovery would be  
 fatal to him, and at once give a single unassisted person in-  
 to the power of his enemies. How then is this disguise to  
 be carried on? especially when Ulysses in person is requir-  
 ed to give an account of his own story? must it not be by  
 assuming the name of another person, and giving a plausi-  
 ble relation of his life, fortunes, and calamities that

sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,  
 Char'd his kindness with his lawful race; 235  
 But when that fate which all must undergo  
 From earth remov'd him to the shades below,  
 The large domain his greedy sons divide,  
 And each was portion'd as the lots decide.

brought him to a strange country, where he has no acquaintance or friend? this obliges him to be circumstantial, nothing giving a greater air of probability than descending to particularities, and this necessitates his prolixity. The whole relation is comprehended in the compass of an hundred and seventy lines: and an episode of no greater length may not perhaps deserve to be called *verbose*, if compared with the length of the *Odyssey*: nay, there may be a reason given why it ought to be of a considerable length: there is a pause in the action, while *Minerva* passes from *Ithaca* to *Telemachus* in *Lacedæmon*: this interval is to be filled up with some incident relating to *Ulysses*, until *Telemachus* is prepared to return; for his assistance is necessary to re establish the affairs of *Ulysses*. This then is a time of leisure, and the poet fills it up with the narrations of *Ulysses* till the return of *Telemachus*, and consequently there is room for a long relation. Besides (remarks *Eustathius*) *Homer* interests all men of all ages in the story, by giving us pieces of true history, antient customs, and exact descriptions of persons and places, instructive and delightful to the world, and these incidents are adorned with all the embellishments of eloquence and poetry.

v. 234. *Sprung of a handmaid*—] *Ulysses* says he was the son of a concubine; this was not a matter of disgrace among the ancients, concubinage being allowed by the laws.

The sons cast lots for their patrimony, an evidence that this was the practice of the antient Greeks. Hence an in-

Little alas ! was left my wretched share,  
 Except a house, a covert from the air :  
 But what by niggard fortune was deny'd  
 A willing widow's copious wealth supply'd.  
 My valour was my plea, a gallant mind  
 That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind,  
 (The sex is ever to a soldier kind.)  
 Now wasting years my former strength confound,  
 And added woes have bow'd me to the ground;  
 Yet by the stubble you may guess the grain,  
 And mark the ruins of no vulgar man.  
 Me Pallas gave to lead the martial storm,  
 And the fair ranks of battle to deform :  
 Me, Mars inspir'd to turn the foe to flight,  
 And tempt the secret ambush of the night.  
 Let ghastly death in all his forms appear,  
 I saw him not ; it was not mine to fear.  
 Before the rest I rais'd my ready steel ;  
 The first I met, he yielded, or he fell.  
 But works of peace my soul disdain'd to bear,  
 The rural labour or domestic care.

inheritance had the name *κληρονομία*, that is from the lot  
 parents put it to the decision of the lot, to avoid the  
 envy and imputation of partiality in the distribution of the  
 estates. It has been judged that the poet writes accord-  
 ing to the Athenian laws, at least this custom prevailed  
 the days of Solon ; for he forbid parents who had several  
 legitimate sons to make a will, but ordained that all the  
 legitimate sons should have an equal share of their father's  
 effects. Eustathius.

v. 259. ———— *my soul disdain'd to bear,*

To raise the mast, the missile dart to wing,  
 And send swift arrows from the bounding string,  
 Were arts the gods made grateful to my mind  
 Those gods, who turn (to various ends design'd)  
 The various thoughts and talents of mankind. 265  
 Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain  
 Some times commander or by land or main,  
 In foreign fields I spread my glory far,  
 Great in the praise, rich in the spoils of war:  
 Hence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame, 270  
 To Crete return'd, an honourable name.  
 But when great Jove that direful war decreed,  
 Which rous'd all Greece and made the mighty bleed;  
 Our states myself and Idomen employ  
 To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy. 275

*The rural labour*———]

Plutarch in his comparison of Aristides and Cato cites these  
 verses,

———*ἔργων δέ μοι ἐφίλον ἴσμεν,*

*Οὐδ' οἰκωφίλῃν, etc.*

and tells us, that they who neglect their private and do-  
 mestic concerns, usually draw their subsistence from vio-  
 lence and rapine. This is certainly a truth: men are apt  
 to supply their wants, occasioned by idleness, by plunder  
 and injustice: but it is as certain that no reflection is in-  
 tended to be cast upon this way of living by Ulysses, for in  
 his age piracy was not only allowable but glorious, and  
 sudden inroads and incursions were practis'd by the greatest  
 heroes. Homer therefore intends to shew that the dispo-  
 sition of Ulysses inclin'd him to pursue the more danger-  
 ous, but more glorious, way of living by war, than the  
 more lucrative, and more secure method of life, by agri-  
 culture and husbandry.



Nine years we warr'd; the tenth saw Ilion fall;  
Homeward we sail'd, but heav'n dispers'd us all.

One only month my wife enjoy'd my stay;  
So will'd the god who gives and takes away.

Nine ships I mann'd equipp'd with ready stores,  
Intent to voyage to th' Egyptian shores;

In feast and sacrifice my chosen train

Six days consum'd; the seventh we plow'd the main.

Crete's ample fields diminish to our eye;

Before the Boreal blasts the vessels fly;

Safe through the level seas we sweep our way;

The steer-man governs, and the ships obey.

The fifth fair morn we stem th' Egyptian tide,

And tilting o'er the bay the vessels ride:

To anchor there my fellows I command,

And spies commission to explore the land.

But sway'd by lust of gain, and headstrong will,

The coasts they ravage, and the natives kill.

The spreading clamour to their city flies,

And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise.

The red'ning dawn reveals the circling fields

Horrid with bristly spears, and glancing shields.

Jove thunder'd on their side. Our guilty head

We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance spread

On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead.

I then explor'd my thought, what course to prove?

(And sure the thought was dictated by Jove,

Oh had he left me to that happier doom,

And sav'd a life of miseries to come!)

The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd, 305  
 And lo on earth my shield and javelin cast,  
 I meet the monarch with a suppliant's face,  
 I proach his chariot, and his knees embrace.  
 He heard, he sav'd, he plac'd me at his side;  
 He state he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd, 310  
 He strain'd the rage the vengeful foe express'd,  
 And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breast  
 Thus! to guard the hospitable rite,  
 And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight:  
 In Egypt thus with peace and plenty blest, 315  
 I liv'd (and happy still had liv'd) a guest,  
 On sev'n bright years successive blessings wait;  
 The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.  
 A false Phœnician of insidious mind,  
 Bus'd in vile arts, and foe to humankind, 320  
 With semblance fair invites me to his home;  
 I seiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam)  
 Domestic in his faithless roof I stay'd,  
 Till the swift sun his annual circle made:  
 In Libya then he meditates the way; 325  
 With guileful art a stranger to betray,  
 And sell to bondage in a foreign land:  
 Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the strand.  
 Through the mid seas the nimble pinnace sails,  
 Of from Crete, before the northern gales: 330  
 When remote her chalky cliffs we lost,  
 And far from ken of any other coast,  
 When all was wild expanse of sea and air;  
 When doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare: 335

He hung a night of horrors o'er their head,  
 (The shaded ocean blacken'd as it spread)  
 He launch'd the fiery bolt; from pole to pole  
 Broad burst the lightnings, deep the thunders roll;  
 In giddy rounds the whirling ship is tost,  
 And all in clouds the smoth'ring sulphur lost.  
 As from a hanging rocks tremendous height,  
 The fable crows with intercepted flight  
 Drop endlong; scarr'd, and black with sulph'rous hue  
 So from the deck are hurl'd the ghastly crew.  
 Such end the wicked found! but Jove's intent  
 Was yet to save th' oppress'd and innocent.  
 Plac'd on the mast (the last recourse of life)  
 With winds and waves I held unequal strife;  
 For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,  
 The tenth soft wafts me to Thesprotia's shore.  
 The monarch's son a shipwrackt wretch reliev'd,  
 The fire with hospitable rites receiv'd,  
 And in his palace like a brother plac'd,  
 With gifts of price and gorgeous garments grac'd.  
 While here I sojourn'd, oft I heard the fame  
 How late Ulysses to the country came,  
 How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he stay'd,  
 And here his whole collected treasure lay'd;  
 I saw my self the vast unnumber'd store  
 Of steel elab'rate, and refulgent ore,  
 And brass high heap'd amidst the regal dome;  
 Immense supplies for ages yet to come!  
 Mean time he voyag'd to explore the will  
 Of Jove, on high Dodona's holy hill,

What means might best his safe return avail,  
To come in pomp, or bear a secret sail?

v. 363.—*he voyag'd to explore the will  
Of Jove, on high Dodona's holy hill.*]

These oaks of Dodona were held to be oraculous, and to be endued with speech, by the ancients; and pigeons were supposed to be the priestesses of the deity. Herodotus in Euterpe gives a full account of what belongs to this oracle, who tells us, that he was informed by the priestesses of Dodona, that two black pigeons flew away from Thebes in Ægypt, and one of them perching upon a tree in Dodona, admonished the inhabitants with an human voice to erect an oracle in that place to Jupiter. But Herodotus solves this fable after the following manner. There were two priestesses carried away from Ægypt, and one of them was sold by the Phœnicians in Greece, where she in her servitude consecrated an altar to Jupiter under an oak; the Dodoneans gave her the name of a pigeon, because she was a Barbarian, and her speech at first no more understood than the chattering of a bird or pigeon; but as soon as she had learned the Greek tongue, it was presently reported that the pigeon spoke with an human voice. She had the epithet Black, because she was an Ægyptian.

Euttathius informs us, that Dodona was antiently a city of Thesprotia, and in process of time the limits of it being changed, it became of the country of the Molossians, that is, it lay between Thessaly and Epirus: near this city was a mountain named Tmarus or Timourus; on this mountain there stood a temple, and within the precincts of it were those oraculous oaks of Jupiter: this was the most antient temple of Greece, according to Herodotus, founded by the Pelasgians, and at first served by priests called Selli; and the goddess Dione being joined with Jupiter in the worship, the service was performed by three aged priestesses, called in the Molossian tongue *πέλαιαι*,

Full oft has Phidon, whilst he pour'd the wine,  
Attesting solemn all the Pow'rs divine,

as old men were called *πίλειοι* (perhaps from the corrupted word *πάλαιοι* or ancients) and the same word *πίλειοι* signifying also pigeons, gave occasion to the fable of the temple of Dodona having doves for priestesses. But if, as Herodotus affirms, the Phœnicians sold this priestess of Jupiter originally to the Greeks, it is probable they were called doves, after the Phœnician language in which the same word with a small alteration signifies both a dove and a priestess. See note on *Odyssey* 12.

Eustathius gives us another solution of this difficulty, and tells us that as there was *κορακομάντις*, or Augers, who drew predictions from the flight and gestures of crows; so there were others who predicted from observations made upon doves; and from hence these doves were called the prophetesses of Dodona, that being the way by which the decrees of the gods were discovered by the Augurs.

I have remarked that the temple of Dodona stood upon the mountain Timourus, hence the word *τίμυραι* came to signify those oracles, and thus *τίμυρος* is used by Lycophron. Now Homer in another place writes,

Ἐὶ γὰρ μὲν αἰνήσουσιν Διὸς μεγάλοιο θήμισις.

Strabo therefore instead of *θήμισις* reads *τίμυραι*; for, observes that author, the oracles, not the laws, of Jupiter, are preserved at Dodona. Eustathius.

But whence arose the fable of these oaks being vocal? I doubt not but this was an illusion of those who gave out the oracles to the people: they concealed themselves within the cavities or hollow of the oaks, and from thence delivered their oracles; and imposing by this method upon the superstition and credulity of those ages, persuaded the world that the gods gave a voice and utterance to the oaks.



That soon Ulysses would return, declar'd,  
 The sailors waiting, and the ships prepar'd. 370  
 But first the king dismiss'd me from his shores,  
 For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful stores;  
 To good Acestes' friendly care consign'd:  
 But other counsels pleas'd the sailors mind:  
 New frauds were plotted by the faithless train, 375  
 And misery demands me once again.  
 Soon as remote from shore they plow the wave,  
 With ready hands they rush to seize their slave;  
 Then with these tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,  
 Stript of my own) and to the vessel bound. 380  
 At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land  
 The ship arriv'd: forth-issuing on the sand,  
 They sought repast; while to th' unhappy kind,  
 The pitying gods themselves my chains unbind.  
 Soft I descended, to the sea apply'd 385  
 My naked breast, and shot along the tide.  
 Soon past beyond their sight, I left the flood,  
 And took the spreading shelter of the wood.  
 Their prize escap'd the faithless pirates mourn'd;  
 But deem'd enquiry vain, and to their ship return'd. 390  
 Screen'd by protecting gods from hostile eyes,  
 They led me to a good man and a wife;

I refer the reader for a larger account of these Dodo-  
 mean oracles to the annotations upon book 16. ver. 285.  
 of the Iliad.

v. 391. *Screen'd by protecting gods from hostile eyes,  
 They led me to a good man and a wife.]*

This is a very artful compliment which Ulysses pays to

To live beneath thy hospitable care,  
And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to bear.

Eumæus, 'The gods guided me to the habitation of a  
'person of wisdom,' and names not Eumæus, leaving it  
to him to apply it.

I doubt not but the reader agrees with Ulysses as to  
the character of Eumæus; there is an air of piety to the  
gods in all he speaks, and benevolence to mankind; he is  
faithful to his king, upright in his trust, and hospitable to  
the stranger.

Dacier is of opinion that ἀνδρὸς ἐπιστήμῳ takes in  
virtue as well as wisdom; and indeed Homer frequently  
joins νόημονες ἡδὲ δίκαιον, and ἀδανήμονες ἡδὲ δίκαιον; that  
is, wisdom and virtue, folly and impiety, throughout the  
Odyssey. *For never, never wicked man was wise.* Vir-  
tue in a great measure depends upon education: it is a  
science, and may be learned like other sciences; in reali-  
ty there is no knowledge that deserves the name, without  
virtue; if virtue be wanting, science becomes artifice: as  
Plato demonstrates from Homer; who, though he is an  
enemy to this poet, has enriched his writings with his sen-  
timents.

v. 394. *And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to  
bear.*] It may not perhaps be unsatisfactory to see how  
Ulysses keeps in sight of truth through this whole fabulous  
story.

He gives a true account of his being at the war of  
Troy; he stays seven years in Ægypt, so long he conti-  
nued with Calypso; the king of Ægypt, whose name Eus-  
tathius tells us was Sethon, according to the ancients, en-  
tertains him hospitably like that goddess; a Phœnician  
detains him a whole year; the same has been observed  
of Circe; the vessel of this Phœnician is lost by a storm,  
and all the crew perishes except Ulysses: the same is true  
of the companions of Ulysses: he is thrown upon the land  
of the Thesprotians by that tempest, and received courte-

Book XIV. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 77

Unhappy guest ! whose sorrows touch my mind ! 395  
 (Thus good Eumæus with a sigh rejoin'd)  
 For real suff'rings since I grieve sincere,  
 Check not with fallacies the springing tear ;  
 Nor turn the passion into groundless joy  
 For him, whom heav'n has destin'd to destroy. 400  
 Oh ! had he perisht on some well-fought day,  
 Or in his friends embraces dy'd away !  
 That grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise  
 Historic marbles, to record his praise :  
 His praise, eternal on the faithful stone, 405  
 Had with transmissive honours grac'd his son.  
 Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,  
 None is the hero, and his glory lost !

ously by Phidon the king of that country ; this represents his being cast upon the Phæacian shore by the storm, and the hospitable Phidon means Alcinous, king of the Phæacians : the manner likewise of his being introduced by Phidon, agrees with his introduction to Alcinous ; the daughter introduces him to Alcinous, and the son to Phidon. Thus we see there is a *concordia discors* through the whole narration, the poet only changing the names of persons and places. Ulysses lay under the absolute necessity thus to falsify his true history, and represent himself as a stranger to the whole island of Ithaca, otherwise it would have been natural for Eumæus to offer to guide him to his friends, upon which a discovery must inevitably have followed, which would have proved fatal to that hero.

v. 407. *Now snatch'd by harpies*——] This place seems to evince that the expression of being torn by the harpies, means that the dead person is deprived of the rites of sepulture ; and not as Dacier understands it, that he is disappeared, or that it is unknown what is become of

While pensive in this solitary den,  
Far from gay cities, and the ways of men,  
I linger life; nor to the court repair,  
But when the constant queen commands my care;

410

him: for the whole lamentation of Eumæus turns upon this point, namely, that Ulysses is dead, and deprived of the funeral ceremonies.

V. 411.—*Nor to the court repair,  
But when the queen——*]

It may appear at first view as if Eumæus thought his absence from the court an aggravation to his calamities, but this is not his meaning; he speaks thus to prevent Ulysses from asking him to introduce him immediately to Penelope; and this is the reason why he enlarges upon the story of the Ætolian, who had deceived him by raising his expectations of the immediate return of Ulysses.

It is remarkable that almost all these fictions are made by Cretans, or have some relation to the island of the Cretans: thus Ulysses feigns himself to be of Crete, and this Ætolian lays the scene of his falsehood in the same island: which, as Eustathius observes may possibly be a latent satire upon that people, who were become a reproach and proverb for their remarkable lying. This agrees exactly with the character given them by St. Paul from Epimenides.

Κεῖντις ἀεὶ ψεύσται.

And κεῖντις signifies to lie.

St. Chrysostom fills up the broken verse thus,

——καὶ γὰρ τάφον, ὃ ἀνα, σῆο.

Κεῖντις ἐτακλήνατο, οὐ δ' ἔδαντις ἰστί γὰρ αἰὲν.

But this is added from Callimachus in his hymn to Jupiter, thus translated by Mr. Prior.

The Cretan boasts thy natal place: but oft

when, to taste her hospitable board,  
 some guest arrives, with rumours of her lord;  
 and these indulge their want, and those their woe, 415  
 and here the tears, and there the goblets flow.  
 by many such have I been warn'd; but chief  
 by one Ætollan robb'd of all belief,  
 whose hap it was to this our roof to roam,  
 for murder banish'd from his native home. 420  
 He swore, Ulysses on the coast of Crete  
 had but a season to refit his fleet;  
 a few revolving months should waft him o'er,  
 fraught with bold warriors and a boundless store.  
 O thou! whom age has taught to understand, 425  
 and heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand!  
 On god or mortal to obtrude a lie  
 forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.  
 Not for such ends my house and heart are free,  
 but dear respect to Jove, and charity. 430  
 And why, oh swain of unbelieving mind!  
 Thus quick reply'd the wisest of mankind)

He meets reproof deserv'd: for he presumptuous  
 Has built a tomb for thee, who never know'st  
 To die, but liv'st the same to-day and ever.

That the latter part of these verses belongs not to Epi-  
 menides, is evident, for St. Paul quotes the verse thus:

*Κεῖντις αἰὲς ψῦσαι, καὶ ἄνητα.*

The two last words are not in Callimachus, and conse-  
 quently the rest is only a conjectural and erroneous addi-  
 tion.



Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,  
A solemn compact let us ratify,

And witness ev'ry pow'r that rules the sky!

435

If here Ulysses from his labours rest,

Be then my prize a tunic and a vest;

And, where my hopes invite me, strait transport  
In safety to Dulichium's friendly court.

But if he greets not thy desiring eye,

440

Hurl me from yon dread precipice on high;

The due reward of fraud and perjury.

Doubtless, oh guest! great laud and praise were mine  
(Reply'd the swain for spotless faith divine)

If, after social rites and gifts bestow'd,

445

I stain'd my hospitable hearth with blood.

How would the gods my righteous toils succeed,

And bless the hand that made a stranger bleed?

No more — th'approaching hours of silent night

First claim refection, then to rest invite;

450

Beneath our humble cottage let us haste,

And here, unenvied, rural dainties taste.

Thus commun'd these; while to their lowly dome  
The full-fed swine return'd with evening home;

Compell'd, reluctant, to their several styces,

455

With din obstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.

v. 455. *Compell'd, reluctant, to their several styces,  
With din obstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.*

There is scarce a more sonorous verse in the whole *Odyssey*.

Κλαγγὴ δ' ἄσπετος ὄρτο συῶν ἀλιζομένων.

The word swine is what debases our idea; which is evi-

Then to the slaves—Now from the herd the best  
Select, in honour of our foreign guest:

With him, let us the genial banquet share,

For great and many are the griefs we bear;

460

While those who from our labours heap their board,

Aspheme their feeder, and forget their lord.

Thus speaking, with dispatchful hand he took

A weighty ax, and cleft the solid oak;

This on the earth he pil'd; a boar full fed

465

Of five years age, before the pile was led:

The swain, whom acts of piety delight,

As servant of the gods, begins the rite;

First shears the forehead of the bristly boar,

And suppliant stands, invoking every Pow'r

470

To speed Ulysses to his native shore.

But if we substitute shepherd in the room of hogherd, and apply to it the most pompous epithet given by Homer to Eumæus: for instance, to say *δῖος*, or the illustrious, hogherd, is mean enough: But the image is more tolerable when we say, the illustrious shepherd; the office of a shepherd (especially as it is familiarized and dignified in poetry by the frequent use of it) being in repute. The Greeks have magnificent words to express the most common objects; we want words of equal dignity, and have the disadvantage of being obliged to endeavour to raise a subject that is now in the utmost contempt, so as to guard from meanness and ignominy.

v. 469. *First sh. irs the forehead of the bristly boar.*

I have already observed that every meal among the ancients was a kind of sacrifice of thanksgiving to the gods; and the table as it were an altar.

This sacrifice being different from any other in Homer, I will fully describe the particulars of it from Eustathius.

A knotty stake then aiming at his head,  
 Down dropp'd he groaning, and the spirit fled.  
 The scorching flames climb round on ev'ry side :  
 Then the sing'd members they with skill divide ;  
 On these, in rolls of fat invol'd with art,  
 The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.  
 Some in the flames, bestrow'd with flour, they threw :  
 Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew :  
 These while on several tables they dispose,  
 As priest himself, the blameless rustic rose :

It is a rural sacrifice ; we have before seen sacrifices in camps, in courts, and in cities, in the Iliad ; but this is the only one of this nature in all Homer.

They cut off the hair of the victim, in commemoration of the original way of clothing, which was made of hair and the skins of beasts.

Eumæus strows flour upon it, in remembrance that before incense was in use, this was the antient manner of offering to the gods, or as Dacier observes, of consecrating the victim, instead of the barley mixed with salt, which had the name of immolation.

Eumæus cut a piece from every part of the victim ; by this he made an Holocaust, or an intire sacrifice.

Eumæus divides the rest at supper ; which was always the office of the most honourable person ; and thus we see Achilles and other heroes employed throughout the Iliad. He portions it into seven parts ; one he allots to Mercury and the nymphs, and the rest he reserves for himself, Ulysses, and his four servants. He gives the chine to Ulysses, which was ever reputed an honour and distinction ; thus Ajax after a victory over Hector is rewarded in the same manner.

Νώτοισι δ' Αἰαντα δινυκίῃσι γίγαιεν  
 Ατρεΐδης.

Expert the destin'd victim to dis-part  
 In seven just portions, pure of hand and heart.  
 One sacred to the Nymphs apart they lay;  
 Another to the winged son of May.  
 The rural tribe in common share the rest,  
 The king the chine, the honour of the feast,

485

v. 484. *One sacred to the Nymphs——*

*Another to the winged son of May.]*

It may be asked why Eumæus allots part of the victim to Mercury and the nymphs, since there is nothing of the like nature to be found in the whole Iliad and Odyssey? This is done in compliance to the place and person of Eumæus, whose employment lies in the country, and who has the care of the herds of Ulysses; he therefore offers to the nymphs, as they are the presidents of the fountains, rivers, groves, and furnish sustenance and food for cattle; and Mercury was held by the ancients to be the patron of shepherds: thus Simonides,

Θύειν Νύμφαις καὶ Μαιάδος τέκνῳ  
 Οὔτοι γὰρ ἀνδρῶν αἶμα ἔχουσι ποιμαίνον.

Plutarch adds (from whom this is taken) that Mercury was a lucrative god, and therefore Eumæus sacrifices to him for increase of his herds: or because he was δόλιος, cunning, and like Ulysses, master of all the arts of cunning and dissimulation, and then Eumæus may be understood to offer to him for the safety of Ulysses, that he might furnish him with artifice to bring him in security to his country; and we see this agrees with his prayer.

What Dacier adds is yet more to the purpose: Eumæus joins Mercury with the nymphs because he was patron of flocks, and the ancients generally placed the figure of a ram at the base of his images; sometimes he is represented carrying a ram upon his arms, sometimes upon his shoulders: in short, it suffices that he was esteemed a rural deity, to make the sacrifice proper to be offered to him by a person whose occupation lay in the country.

Who sat delighted at his servant's board ;  
 The faithful servant joy'd his unknown lord.  
 Oh be thou dear (Ulysses cry'd) to Jove,  
 As well thou claimest a grateful stranger's love !

Be then thy thanks (the bounteous swain reply'd)  
 Enjoyment of the good the gods provide.  
 From God's own hand descend our joys and woes ;  
 These he decrees, and he but suffers those :  
 All pow'r is his, and whatsoe'er he wills,  
 The will it self, omnipotent, fulfills.  
 This said, the first-fruits to the gods he gave ;  
 Then pour'd of offer'd wine the sable wave :  
 In great Ulysses' hand he plac'd the bowl,  
 He sat, and sweet refection cheer'd his soul.  
 The bread from canisters Mefaulius gave,  
 (Eumæus' proper treasure bought this slave,  
 And led from Taphos, to attend his board,  
 A servant added to his absent lord)

v. 504. *And led from Taphos*——] This custom of purchasing slaves prevailed over all the world, as appears not only from many places of Homer, but of the holy scriptures, in which mention is made of slaves bought with money. The Taphians lived in a small island adjacent to Ithaca ; Mentès was king of it, as appears from the first of the *Odyssey* : they were generally pirates, and are supposed to have had their name from their way of living, which in the Phœnician tongue (as Bochart observes) signifies rapine ; Hataph, and by contraction Taphos, bearing that signification.

Frequent use has been made of Phœnician interpretations through the course of these notes, and perhaps it may be judged necessary to say something why they may be supposed to give names to countries and persons, more than any other nation.



His task it was the wheaten leaves to lay,  
And from the banquet take the bowls away.  
And now the rage of hunger was repress'd,  
And each betakes him to his couch to rest.

They are reported to be the inventors of letters, Lucan, lib. 3.

*Phœnices primi, famæ si creditur, ausi  
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.*

and were the greatest navigators in the world. Dionysius says they were the first,

Οἱ πρῶτοι νήεσσιν ἐπειρήσαντο θαλάσσης  
Πρῶτοι δ' ἐμπορίας ἀλιδίνεος ἐμνήσαντο.

The first who used navigation, the first who trafficked by the ocean.' If we put these two qualities together, it is no wonder that a great number of places were called by Phœnician names; for they being the first navigators must necessarily discover a multitude of islands, countries and cities, to which they would be obliged to give names when they described them: and nothing is so probable as that they gave those names according to the observations they made upon the nature of the several countries or employments of the inhabitants. In the present instance, the Taphians being remarkable pirates, (as appears from Homer,

——Τάφιοι ληΐσORES ἄνδρες,

——ληΐσῃσιν ἐπισπόμενος Τάφιοισι.)

the Phœnicians, who first discovered this island, called it Taph, the island of pirates. Places receive appellations according to the language of the discoverer, and generally from observations made upon the people. It will add a weight to this supposition, if we remember that Homer was well acquainted with the traditions and customs of the Phœnicians, for he speaks frequently of that people through the course of the Odyssæy.

Now came the night, and darkness cover'd o'er 510  
The face of things; the winds began to roar;

v. 510. *Now came the night——*

*——the winds began to roar, etc.]*

Eustathius observes that Homer introduces the following story by a very artful connection, and makes it as it were grow out of the subject; the coldness of the present season brings to his mind a time like it, when he lay before Troy.

It is remarkable that almost all poets have taken an opportunity to give long descriptions of the night; Virgil, Statius, Apollonius, Tasso and Dryden have enlarged upon this subject: Homer seems industriously to have avoided it: perhaps he judged such descriptions to be no more than excrescencies, and at best but beautiful superfluites. A modern hypercritic thinks Mr. Dryden to have excelled all the poets in this point.

*All things are bush'd as nature's self lay dead,  
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head, etc.*

The last verse is translated from Statius,

*Et simulant fessos curvata cacumina somnos.*

which I mention only to propose it to consideration, whether *cacumina* must in this place of necessity signify the tops of mountains; why may it not be applied, as it is frequently, to the tops of the trees? I question whether the nodding of a mountain, or the appearance of its nodding, be a natural image: whereas if we understand it of the trees, the difficulty vanishes, and the meaning will be much more easy, that the very trees seem to nod, as in sleep.

I beg the reader's patience to mention another verse of Statius, that has been undoubtedly mistaken.

*Qualis ubi audito venantum murmure Tigris,  
Horruit in maculas.*

Which Cowley renders

The driving storm the wat'ry west-wind pours,  
 And Jove descends in deluges of show'rs.  
 Studious of rest and warmth, Ulysses lies,  
 Foreseeing from the first the storm would rise ; 515  
 In meer necessity of coat and cloak,  
 With artful preface to his host he spoke.

Hear me, my friends ! who this good banquet grace ;  
 'Tis sweet to play the fool in time and place,  
 And wine can of their wits the wise beguile, 520  
 Make the sage frolic, and the serious smile,  
 The grave in merry measures frisk about,  
 And many a long repented word bring out.  
 Since to be talkative I now commence,  
 Let wit cast off the fullen yoke of sense. 525

— *he swells with angry pride,*

*And calls forth all his spots on every side.*

In which sense also the author of the Spectator quotes it from Cowley. But it is impossible to imagine that the hair of any creature can change into spots ; and if any creature could change it by anger, would not the spots remain when the passion was over ? the assertion is absolutely against nature, and matter of fact ; and as absurd as to affirm that the hair of a Tiger blushes. This mistake arises from the double sense of the word *maculae*, which signifies also the *meshes*, of a *net*, as any common dictionary will inform us. So Tully, *Reticulum minutis maculis* ; Columella, *Rete grandi macula* ; Ovid, *Distinctum maculis rete*. This way the sense is obvious : no wonder that a Tiger when enclosed in the toils should *errere in maculis*, or erect his hair when he flies against the meshes, endeavouring to escape ; and it agrees with the nature of that animal, to roughen his hair when he is angry. I beg the reader's pardon for all this, but the mention of a hypercritic was infecting, and led me into it unawares.

Once I was strong (would heav'n restore those days)  
 And with my betters claim'd a share of praise.  
 Ulysses, Menelaus led forth a band,  
 And join'd me with them, ('twas their own command)  
 A deathful ambush for the foe to lay,  
 Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way :  
 There, clad in arms, along the marshes spread,  
 We made the ozier-fringed bank our bed.  
 Full soon th'inclemency of heav'n I feel,  
 Nor had these shoulders cov'ring, but of steel.  
 Sharp blew the north ; snow whitening all the fields  
 Froze with the blast, and gath'ring glaz'd our shields,  
 There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and vest,  
 Lay cover'd by their ample shields at rest.  
 Fool that I was ! I left behind my own ;  
 The skill of weather and of winds unknown,  
 And trusted to my coat and shield alone !

v. 540. *I left behind my cloak, etc.*] To understand this passage, we must remember that in those eastern regions, after very hot days an extreme cold night would sometimes succeed, even with frost and snow, contrary to the usual order of the season : if it had been winter, no doubt Ulysses would have armed himself against the nocturnal cold, and not have been reduced to such an extremity.

There is one incident in this story that seems extraordinary ; Ulysses and Menelaus are said to form an ambush under the very walls of Troy, and yet are described to be sleeping while they thus form it : the words are *ἐν κλισίῃσι*. *Εἴδοι* does not necessarily signify to be asleep, as is already proved from the conclusion of the first line, but here it must have that import, for Ulysses tells his companions that he has had an extraordinary dream. Besides, even a tendency towards sleep should be avoided

When now was wasted more than half the night,  
And the stars faded at approaching light ;

Sudden I jogg'd Ulysses, who was laid 545

Falt by my side, and shiv'ring thus I said.

Here longer in this field I cannot lie,

The winter pinches, and with cold I die,

And die asham'd (oh wisest of mankind)

The only fool who left his cloak behind. 550

He thought, and answer'd : hardly waking yet,

Sprung in his mind the momentary wit ;

(That wit, which or in council, or in fight,

Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right)

Hush thee, he cry'd, (soft whisp'ring in my ear) 555

Speak not a word, lest any Greek may hear——

And then (supporting on his arm his head)

Hear me, companions ! (thus aloud he said)

Methinks too distant from the fleet we lyé :

Ev'n now a vision stood before my eye,

And sure the warning vision was from high :

Let from among us some swift courier rise,

Haste to the gen'ral, and demand supplies.

Upstart'd Thoas strait, Andræmon's son,

Nimbly he rose, and cast his garment down ; 565

Instant the racer vanish'd off the ground ;

That instant in his cloak I wrapt me round :

And safe I slept, till brightly-dawning shone

The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne.

Soldiers in an ambuscade, especially by the leaders of it :

The only answer that occurs to me, is that perhaps they

had centinels waking while they slept ; but even this would

be unfoldier like in our ages.



Oh were my strength as then, as then my age! 570  
 Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.  
 Yet tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then  
 The honours and the offices of men:  
 Some master, or some servant would allow  
 A cloak and vest—but I am nothing now! 575

Well hast thou spoke (rejoin'd th' attentive swain)  
 Thy lips let fall no idle word or vain!  
 Nor garment shalt thou want, nor ought beside,  
 Meet, for the wand'ring suppliant to provide.  
 But in the morning take thy cloaths again, 580  
 For here one vest suffices ev'ry swain;

v. 580. *But in the morning take thy cloaths again.*] This is not spoken in vain, it was necessary for Ulysses to appear in the form of a beggar to prevent discovery.

The word in the Greek is *διοπαλιζεις*, which it is impossible to translate without a circumlocution: it paints (observes Eustathius) exactly the dress of a beggar, and the difficulty he labours under in drawing his rags to cover one part of his body that is naked, and while he covers that, leaving the other part bare: *διοπαλιζεις* is *ταῖς παλάμαις δονήσεις* or *δινήσεις*, and expresses how a beggar is embarrassed in the act of covering his body, by reason of the rents in his cloaths.

v. 581. *For here one vest suffices ev'ry swain.*] It is not at first view evident why Ulysses requests a change of raiment from Eumæus, for a better dress would only have exposed him to the danger of a discovery. Besides this would have been a direct opposition to the injunctions of the goddess of wisdom, who had not only disguised him in the habit of a beggar, but changed his features to a conformity with it. Why then should he make this petition? the answer is, to carry on his disguise the better before Eumæus; he has already told him that he was once a person

No change of garments to our hinds is known :

But when return'd, the good Ulysses' son

With better hand shall grace with fit attires

His guest, and send thee where thy soul desires.

585

The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,

And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed :

of dignity, tho' now reduced to poverty by calamities : and consequently a person who had once known better fortunes would be uneasy under such mean circumstances, and desire to appear like himself ; therefore he asks a better dress, that Eumæus may believe his former story.

What Eumæus speaks of not having many changes of garments, is not a sign of poverty, but of the simplicity of the manners of those ages. It is the character of the luxurious vain Phæacians, to delight in changes of dress, and agrees not with this plain, industrious Ithacan, Eumæus.

I wonder this last part of the relation of Ulysses has escaped the censure of the critics : the circumstance of getting the cloak of Thoas in the cold night, though it shows the artifice of Ulysses essential to his character, yet perhaps may be thought unworthy the majesty of epic poetry, where every thing ought to be great and magnificent. It is of such a nature as to raise a smile, rather than admiration, and Virgil has utterly rejected such levities. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulysses adapts himself to Eumæus, and endeavours to engage his favour by that piece of pleasantry ; yet this does not solve the objection, for Eumæus is not a person of a low character : no one in the *Odyssey* speaks with better sense, or better morality. One would almost imagine that Homer was sensible of the weakness of this story, he introduces it so artfully : he tells us in a short preface, that wine unbends the most serious and wise person, and makes him laugh, dance and speak without his usual caution : and then he proceeds to the fable of his ambush before Troy. But no introduction can reconcile it to those who think such comic relations should not at all be introduced into epic poetry.

The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide  
He spreads ; and adds a mantle thick and wide ;

With store to heap above him, and below,  
And guard each quarter as the tempests blow.

There lay the king, and all the rest supine ;  
All, but the careful master of the swine :

Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care :

Well arm'd, and fenc'd against nocturnal air ;

His weighty faulchion o'er his shoulder ty'd :

His shaggy cloak a mountain goat supply'd :

With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,

He seeks his lodging in the rocky den.

There to the tusked herd he bends his way,

Where screen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they lay.

v. 594. *Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care.*] A French critic has been very severe upon this conduct of Eumæus, ' The divine hogherd (says he) having given the ' divine Ulysses his supper, sends him to sleep with his ' hogs, that had white teeth.' When critics find fault, they ought to take care that they impute nothing to an author but what the author really speaks, otherwise it is not criticism, but calumny and ignorance. Monsieur Perault is here guilty of both, for Ulysses sleeps in the house of Eumæus, and Eumæus retires to take care of his charge, not to sleep but to watch with them.

This and the preceding book take up no more than the space of one day. Ulysses lands in the morning, which is spent in consultation with Minerva how to bring about his restoration: about noon he comes to Eumæus, for immediately after his arrival they dine: they pass the afternoon and evening in conference: so that thirty-five days are exactly completed since the beginning of the *Odyssey*.

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590  
THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XV.

*Plu. after r. 321.*

598  
THE ARGUMENT.

The return of Telemachus.

600  
lay. The goddess Minerva commands Telemachus in a vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the soothsayer. The scene then changes to the cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time Telemachus arrives on the coast, and sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumæus.

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N OW had Minerva reach'd those ample plains,  
Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaus reigns;  
Anxious she flies to great Ulysses' heir,  
His instant voyage challeng'd all her care.

Neither this book, nor indeed some of the following, are to be reckoned among the most shining parts of the Odyssey. They are narrative, and generally low; yet natural, and just enough, considering Homer was resolved to describe and follow low life so very minutely. This great poet here resembles an evening sun; he has not the same heat or brightness; there are several little clouds about him, though in some places gilded and adorned: however, to make us amends, he breaks out again before the conclusion of his course, and sets at last in glory.

Beneath the royal portico display'd,  
With Nestor's son, Telemachus was lay'd;

There is no doubt, but all the parts of a poem are not capable of equal lustre; nay they ought not to dazzle us alike, or tire us by a perpetual strain upon the imagination. But in these cooler relations a translator has a hard task: he is expected to shine, where the author is not bright: and the unreasonable critic demands a copy more noble than the original. It is true, these are the passages of which he ought to take particular care, and to set them off to the best advantage: but however he may polish a vulgar stone, it will still retain its inherent degree of cloudiness; and the man is ignorant indeed, who thinks one can make it a diamond.

The story now turns to Telemachus, and the poet briefly describes his voyage to his country: there is a necessity to be concise, for the hero of an epic poem is never to be out of sight after his introduction. The little time that Homer employs in the return of Telemachus is not spent unusefully by Ulysses; during this interval, he learns the state of his public and domestic affairs from Eumæus, and prepares the way for the destruction of the suitors, the chief design of the whole *Odyssey*. There is another reason why the poet ought not to dwell at large upon the story of Telemachus; he bears but an incidental relation to the *Odyssey*, and consequently Homer was necessitated to pass over his actions with brevity, that he might describe the hero of his poem at full length. It has been objected that no mention has been made of any action at all of Telemachus during his whole stay with Menelaus, and that he lies there idly, without making his voyage contribute any thing to the restitution of Ulysses; but from the former observation it is evident, that this silence in the poet proceeds from judgment; nothing is to be inserted in an epic poem but what has some affinity with the main design of it: but what affinity could the actions of Telema-



in sleep profound the son of Nestor lies :  
 Not thine, Ulysses ! care unseal'd his eyes :

thus in the Spartan court have with those of Ulysses ? this  
 could have been to make two heroes in one poem, and  
 could have broken the unity of the action ; whereas by  
 the contrary conduct Homer unites the two stories, and  
 makes the voyage of Telemachus subservient to the chief  
 action ; namely, the restitution of Ulysses. Telemachus  
 undertakes a voyage to make enquiry after Ulysses ; this  
 the poet fully describes, because it has an immediate rela-  
 tion to Ulysses ; but passes over all other adventures dur-  
 ing the absence of Telemachus, because they have no re-  
 lation to the design.

I know it has been objected, that the whole story of  
 Telemachus is foreign to the *Odyssey*, and that the four  
 first books have not a sufficient connection with the rest of  
 the poem, and therefore that there is a double action : but  
 this objection will cease, if it be made appear, that this voy-  
 age contributes to the restoration of Ulysses ; for what-  
 ever incident has such an effect, is related to the subject,  
 and essential to it. Now that this voyage has such an  
 effect is very evident ; the suitors were ready to seize the  
 throne of Ulysses, and compel his wife to marry ; but by  
 this voyage Telemachus breaks their whole designs. Instead  
 of usurping the throne, they are obliged to defend them-  
 selves : they defer their purpose, and waste much time in  
 endeavouring to intercept him in his return. By this me-  
 thod leisure is gained from the violence and addresses of  
 the suitors, till Ulysses returns and brings about his own  
 re-establishment. This voyage therefore is the secret  
 source from which all the happiness of Ulysses flows : for  
 had not Telemachus sailed to Pyle, Penelope must have  
 been compelled to marry and the throne of Ulysses usurp-  
 ed. I have been more large upon this objection, be-  
 cause many foreign critics lay great weight upon it. See  
 Note 19. on the first book.

Restless he griev'd, with various fears oppress'd,  
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast.

There has lately been a great dispute amongst the French, concerning the length of the stay of Telemachus from his country. The debate is not very material, nor is it very difficult to settle that point. Telemachus sailed from Ithaca in the evening of the second day, and returned to it on the thirty eight in the morning, so that he is absent thirty five days completely.

v. 1. *Now had Minerva, etc.*] If this had been related by an historian, he would have only said that Telemachus judged it necessary for his affairs to sail back to his own country; but a poet steps out of the common beaten road, ascribes the wisdom of that hero to the goddess of it, and introduces her in person, to give a dignity to his poetry.

The reader may consult in general the extracts from Bossu, (placed before the Odyssey) concerning machines or the interposition of deities in epic poetry. I will here beg leave to set them in a different and more particular light.

It has been imagined that a deity is never to be introduced but when all human means are ineffectual: if this were true, Minerva would be in vain employed in bringing Telemachus back, when a common messenger might have answered that purpose as well as the goddess. I doubt not but the verse of Horace has led many into this error;

*Nec Deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus.*

This rule is to be applied only to the theatre, of which Horace there speaks, and means no more, than when the knot of the play is to be untied, and no other way is left for making the discovery, then let a god descend and clear the intricacy to the auditors. But as Mr. Dryden observes, it has no relation to epic poetry.

When, O Telemachus ! (the goddess said)

Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd.

It is true, that a deity is never to be introduced upon little and unworthy occasions ; the very design of machines is to add weight and dignity to the story ; and consequently an unworthy employment defeats the very intent of them, and debases the deities by making them act in offices unworthy of the characters of divine personages : but when it is as true, that a poet is at liberty to use them for ornament as well as necessity. For instance, both Virgil and Homer in their descriptions of storms introduce deities, Neptune and Æolus, only to fill our minds with grandeur and terror ; for in reality a storm might have happened without a miracle, and Æneas and Ulysses both have been driven upon unknown shores, by a common storm as well as by immediate interposition of Neptune or Æolus. But machines have a very happy effect ; the poet seems to converse with gods, gives signs of a divine transport, and distinguishes his poem in all parts from an history.

v. 5. *Beneath the royal portico, etc.*] Minerva here finds Telemachus in bed : it is necessary to remember that Ulysses landed in Ithaca in the morning of the thirty fifth day ; and when Minerva left him, she went to the Spartan court to Telemachus ; this vision therefore appears to that hero in the night following the thirty fifth day. On the thirty sixth he departs from Menelaus, and lodges that night with Diocles ; on the thirty seventh he embarks towards the evening, sails all night, and lands on the thirty eighth in the morning in his own country. From this observation it is likewise evident, that Ulysses passes two days in discourse with Eumæus, though the poet only distinguishes the time by the voyage of Telemachus ; for the preceding book concludes with the thirty fifth day, and Telemachus spends the thirty sixth and thirty seventh and the following night in his return, and meets Ulysses in the

Thus leaving careless thy paternal right  
 The robbers prize, the prey to lawless might.  
 On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam,  
 Ev'n now, the hand of rapine sacks the dome.  
 Hence to Atrides; and his leave implore  
 To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore:  
 Fly, whilst thy mother virtuous yet withstands  
 Her kindred's wishes, and her sire's commands;

morning of the thirty eight day. This remark is necessary to avoid confusion, and to make the two stories of Ulysses and Telemachus coincide, in this and the next book of the *Odyssey*.

v. 20. *Her kindred's wishes, and her sire's commands.* Ovid had these lines in his view in his epistle of Penelope to Ulysses.

*Me pater Icarus viduo decedere lecto  
 Cogit, et immensas increpat usque moras.*

But why should Minerva make use of these arguments, to persuade Telemachus to return immediately; and give him no information concerning the safety of Ulysses, who was now actually landed in his own country? the poet refers this discovery to be made in the future part of the story; if Telemachus had known of his father's being already returned, there could have been no room for the beautiful interview between the father and the son; for the doubts and fears, the surprize and filial tenderness, on the part of Telemachus; and for the paternal fondness, the yearning of nature, and the transports of joy, on the part of Ulysses. Aristotle particularly commends this conduct of Homer with respect to Ulysses. These disguises and concealments, (says that author) perplex the fable with agreeable plots and intricacies, surprize us with a variety of incidents, and give room for the relation of many adventures.

through both, Eurymachus pursues the dame,  
and with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.

Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain ;

Thou know'st the practice of the female train,

lost in the children of the present spouse

25

They slight the pledges of the former vows ;

Their love is always with the lover past ;

Still the succeeding flame expells the last.

ares ; while Ulysses still appears in assumed characters,  
and upon every occasion recites a new history, at the same  
time the poet excellently sustains his character, which is  
every where distinguished by a wise and ready dissimula-  
tion.

v. 24. *Thou know'st the practice of the female train.*]

This is not spoken in derogation of Penelope, nor applied  
to her in particular ; it is laid down as an universal maxim,  
and uttered by the goddesses of wisdom : but (says madam  
Macier) I wish the poet had told us, if the husbands in his  
days had better memories toward their departed wives !  
What advantage would this be to the fair sex, if we  
know that an husband may possibly forget a former wife ?  
I choose rather to congratulate the modern ladies, against  
whom there is not the least objection of this nature. Is it  
not evident, that all our widows are utterly disconsolate,  
appear many months in deep mourning ? and whenever they  
have prevailed upon to a second marriage, do they not chuse  
the strongest, best built, and most vigorous youth of  
the nation ? For what other reason, but that such consti-  
tutions may be a security against their ever feeling the like  
 calamity again ? what I have here said shews that the  
world is well changed since the times of Homer ! and  
however the race of man is dwindled and decayed since  
those ages, yet it is a demonstration that the modern ladies  
are not to blame for it.



Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,  
 Till heav'n decrees to bleſs thee in a bride.  
 But now thy more attentive ears incline,  
 Obſerve the warnings of a pow'r divine :  
 For thee their ſnares the ſuitor lords ſhall lay  
 In Samos ſands, or ſtreights of Ithaca,  
 To ſeize thy life ſhall lurk the murd'rous band,  
 Ere yet thy footſteps preſs thy native land.  
 No——ſooner far their riot and their luſt  
 All-cov'ring earth ſhall bury deep in duſt !  
 Then diſtant from the ſcatter'd iſlands ſteer,  
 Nor let the night retard thy full career ;  
 Thy heav'nly guardian ſhall inſtruct the gales  
 To ſmooth thy paſſage, and ſupply thy ſails :  
 And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,  
 Send to the town thy veſſel with thy friends,  
 But ſeek thou firſt the maſter of the ſwine,  
 (For ſtill to thee his loyal thoughts incline)  
 There paſs the night ; while he his courſe purſues  
 To bring Penelope the wiſh'd-for news,  
 That thou ſafe ſailing from the Pylian ſtrand  
 Art come to bleſs her in thy native land.

Thus ſpoke the goddeſs, and reſum'd her flight  
 To the pure regions of eternal light.

Mean while Piſiſtratus he gently ſhakes,  
 And with theſe words the ſlumb'ring youth awakes.

Riſe, ſon of Neſtor ! for the road prepare,  
 And join the harnes'd courſers to the car.

What cauſe, he cry'd, can juſtify our flight,  
 To tempt the dangers of forbidding night ?

Here wait we rather, till approaching day  
 Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready way. 60  
 Nor think of flight before the Spartan king  
 Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;  
 Gifts, which to distant ages safely stor'd,  
 The sacred act of friendship shall record.

Thus he. But when the dawn bestreak'd the east, 65  
 The king from Helen rose, and sought his guest.  
 As soon as his approach the hero knew,  
 The splendid mantle round him first he threw,  
 Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,  
 Respectful met the monarch, and bespoke. 70

Hail, great Atrides, favour'd of high Jove!  
 Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.  
 Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,  
 Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.

If with desire so strong thy bosom glows, 75  
 Ill, said the king, should I thy wish oppose;  
 For oft in others freely I reprove  
 The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;  
 Who love too much, hate in the like extreme,  
 And both the golden mean alike condemn. 80

Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,  
 Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend;  
 True friendship's laws are by this rule express'd,  
 Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

v. 84. *Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.*  
 Homer has here laid together admirable precepts for social life; the passage was much admired; Herodotus borrowed it, as we are informed by Eustathius.

Yet stay, my friends, and in your chariot take  
 The noblest presents that our love can make :  
 Mean time commit we to our women's care  
 Some choice domestic viands to prepare ;  
 The trav'ler rising from the banquet gay,  
 Eludes the labours of the tedious way.  
 Then if a wider course shall rather please  
 Through spacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,  
 Atrides in his chariot shall attend ;  
 Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.  
 No prince will let Ulysses heir remove  
 Without some pledge, some monument of love :  
 These will the chaldron, these the tripod give,  
 From these the well-pair'd mules we shall receive  
 Or bowl emboss'd whose golden figures live.

To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, reply'd. 100  
 O monarch, care of heav'n ! thy people's pride !  
 No friend in Ithaca my place supplies,  
 No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes :  
 My stores expos'd and fenceless house demand  
 The speediest succour from my guardian hand ; 105

————— *τραπίζη*  
*Μελίξαντ' ἀπόπεμψαι ἱπὰν ἰθίλοι νύσθαι.*

But perhaps Eustathius quoted by memory, or through inadvertency wrote down Herodotus for Theocritus, in whom these lines are to be found :

*Μηδὲ ξεινοδοκὸν κακὸν ἔμμεναι, ἀλλὰ τραπίζαν  
 Μελίξαντ' ἀπόπεμψαι, ἱπὰν ἰθίλωντι νύσθαι.*

Left in a search too anxious and too vain  
Of one lost joy, I lose what yet remain.

His purpose when the gen'rous warrior heard,  
He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.

Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home, 110

Was Boethoëdes Eteoneus come;

Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,

And o'er the coals the smoaking fragments lays.

v. 109. *He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.*]

It is in the original, *He commanded Helen and her maids* to do it. The moderns have blamed Menelaus for want of delicacy, in commanding his queen to perform such household offices. I read such passages with pleasure, because they are exact pictures of antient life: we may as well condemn the first inhabitants of the world for want of politeness, in living in tents and bowers, and not in palaces. This command of Menelaus agrees with those manners, and with the patriarchal life. *Gen.' xviii 6.* 'Abraham hastened into his tent, and said unto Sarah his wife, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal: knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.'

I doubt not but the continual descriptions of entertainments have likewise given offence to many; but we may be in some degree reconciled to them, if we consider they are not only instances of the hospitality of the ancients, but of their piety and religion: every meal was a religious act, a sacrifice, or a feast of thanksgiving: libations of wine, and offerings of part of the flesh were constantly made at every entertainment. This gives a dignity to the description, and when we read it, we are not to consider it as an act merely of eating and drinking, but as an office of worship to the Gods.

This is a note of the critics; but perhaps the same thing might be as well said of our modern entertainments, wherever the good practice of saying Grace before and after meat is not yet laid aside.

Mean time the king, his son, and Helen, went  
 Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent. 115  
 The king selected from the glitt'ring rows  
 A bowl ; the prince a silver beaker chose,  
 The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes  
 Her various textures of unnumber'd dies,  
 And chose the largest ; with no vulgar art 120  
 Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part :  
 Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,  
 Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.  
 Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,  
 And thus the king Ulysses' heir address'd. 125  
 Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring Jove  
 With happiest omens thy desires approve !

v. 123. *Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.*  
 If this passage were translated literally it would stand thus,  
*Helen chose a vesture of most beautiful embroidery, and  
 of the largest extent, a vesture that lay beneath the rest.*  
 We are to understand by the last circumstance, that this  
 vesture was the choicest of her wardrobe, it being reposit-  
 ed with the greatest care, or *μακρὸς ἀκλόν*. The verses  
 are taken from lib. 6. of the Iliad. This robe was the work  
 of Helen's own hands ; an instance that in those days a  
 great lady, or a great beauty, might be a good work-woman :  
 and she here seems to take particular care to obviate an  
 opinion one might otherwise have, that she did not apply  
 herself to these works till her best days were past. We  
 are told in the Iliad,

Her in the palace at her loom she found,  
 The golden web her own sad story crown'd :  
 The Trojan wars she weav'd, herself the prize,  
 And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.



Book XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 105

This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine  
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;  
To me this present, of Vulcanian frame, 130  
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;  
To thee we now consign the precious load,  
The pride of kings, and labour of a God.

Then gave the cup; while Megapenthe brought  
A silver vase with living sculpture wrought. 135  
The beauteous queen, advancing next, display'd  
The shining veil, and thus endearing said.

Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,  
Long since, in better days, by Helen wove:  
Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay, 140  
To deck thy bride, and grace thy nuptial day.  
Mean time may'st thou with happiest speed regain  
Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.

She said, and gave the veil; with grateful look  
The prince the variegated present took. 145  
And now, when through the royal dome they pass'd  
High on a throne the king each stranger plac'd.

A golden ew'r th' attendant damsel brings  
Replete with water from the crystal springs;  
With copious streams the shining vase supplies 150  
A silver laver of capacious size.

They wash. The tables in fair order spread,  
The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread;  
Viands of various kinds allure the taste  
Of choicest sort and savour; rich repast! 155

Whilst Eteoneus portions out the shares,  
Atides' son the purple draught prepares.

And now (each sated with the genial feast,  
 And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceast)  
 Ulysses' son, with his illustrious friend, 160  
 The horses join, the polish'd car ascend.  
 Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,  
 And the wide portal echoes to the sound.  
 The king preceds; a bowl with fragrant wine  
 (Libation destin'd to the pow'rs divine) 165  
 His right hand held: before the steeds he stands,  
 Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these commands,  
 Farewel and prosper, youths! let Nestor know  
 What grateful thoughts still in my bosom glow,  
 For all the proofs of his paternal care; 170  
 Through the long dangers of the ten-years war.  
 Ah doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)  
 Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.  
 And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet!  
 To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat: 175

v. 174. *And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet!*  
 etc.] It is not impossible but a false reading may have  
 crept into the text in this verse. In the present edition  
 it stands thus,

———— αἰ γὰρ ἔγών ὣς  
 Νηήσας, Ἰθάκην δὲ κίων, Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐνὶ δίκῃ  
 "Εἰποιμ' . ————

The sense will be less intricate, and the construction  
 more easy, if instead of κίων, we insert κίχων, and read  
 the line thus pointed,

Νηήσας Ἰθάκην δὲ, κίχων Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐνὶ δίκῃ  
 "Εἰποιμ' ————

How will each speech his grateful wonder raise!

How will each gift indulge us in thy praise!

Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right

Advanc'd the bird of Jove: auspicious sight!

A milk white fowl his clinching talents bore, 180

With care domestic pamper'd at the floor.

Peasants in vain with threatening cries pursue,

In solemn speed the bird majestic flew

Full dexter to the car: the prosp'rous sight

Fill'd ev'ry breast with wonder and delight. 185

But Nestor's son the chearful silence broke,

And in these words the Spartan chief bespoke.

Say if to us the gods these omens send,

Or fates peculiar to thyself portend? 189

Whilst yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts oppress'd,

The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breast.

Hear me, she cry'd, to whom the Gods have giv'n,

To read this sign, and mystic sense of heav'n.

Then the verse will have this import, 'O may I, upon my return to Ithaca, finding Ulysses in his palace, give him an account of your friendship!' Whereas in the common editions there is a tautology, and either *κῆρυξ* or *ῥήσας* must be allowed to be a superfluity.

v. 192. *Hear me, she cry'd*, etc.] It is not clear why the poet ascribes a greater quickness and penetration to Helen in the solution of this prodigy, than to Menelaus. Is it, as Eustathius asserts, from a superior acuteness of nature and presence of mind in the fair sex! Or is it, that Helen in this resembles some modern beauties, who (tho' their husbands be asked the question) will make the answer themselves? I would willingly believe that Helen might happen to stand in such a position, as to be able to

As thus the plummy sov'reign of the air  
 Left on the mountain's brow his callow care,  
 And wander'd through the wide ethereal way  
 To pour his wrath on yon luxurious prey ;

make more minute observations upon the flight of the eagle, than Menelaus ; and being more circumstantial in the observation, she might for that reason be more ready and circumstantial in the interpretation. But Homer himself tells us, that she received it from the gods. This is a pious lesson, to teach us in general that all knowledge is the gift of God, and perhaps here particularly inserted to raise the character of Helen, and make us less surprised to see her forgiven by Menelaus, when she is not only pardoned, but favoured thus with inspiration. And indeed it was necessary to reconcile us to this fatal beauty ; at whom the reader is naturally enough offended : She is an actress in many of the scenes of the Odyssey, and consequently to be redeemed from contempt : This is done by degrees ; the poet steals away the adulteress from our view, to set before us the amiable penitent.

v. 194. *As thus the plummy sov'reign, etc.*] Ulysses is the eagle, the bird represents the suitors : the cries of the men and women when the eagle seized his prey, denote the lamentations of the relations of the suitors, who are slain by Ulysses. The circumstance of the flight of the eagle close to the horses, is added to shew that the prodigy had a fixed and certain reference to a person present ; namely Telemachus : The eagle comes suddenly from a mountain ; this means that Ulysses shall unexpectedly arrive from the country to the suitors destruction. The fowl is said to be fed by the family ; this is a full designation of the suitors, who feed upon Ulysses, and prey upon his family. And as this bird is killed by the talons of the eagle, so the suitors fall by the Spear of Ulysses. Eustathius.

So shall thy godlike father, tofs'd in vain  
Through all the dangers of the boundless main,  
Arrive (or is perchance already come) 200  
From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.

Oh ! if this promis'd bliss by thund'ring Jove,  
(The prince reply'd) stand fix'd in fate above ;  
To thee, as to some God, I'll temples raise,  
And crown thy altars with the costly blaze. 205

He said ; and bending o'er his chariot, flung  
Athwart the fiery steeds the smaring thong ;  
The bounding shafts upon the harness play,  
Till night descending intercepts the way.  
To Diocles, at Phæraæ, they repair, 210

Whose boasted fire was sacred Alpheus' heir ;  
With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,  
Nor found the hospitable rites unpay'd.  
But soon as morning from her orient bed  
Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red, 215

They join'd the steeds and on the chariot sprung ;  
The brazen portals in their passage rung.

To Pylos soon they came ; when thus began  
To Nestor's heir Ulysses' godlike son :

Let not Pisistratus in vain be prest, 220  
Nor unconsenting hear his friend's request ;  
His friend by long hereditary claim,  
In toils his equal, and in years the same.

No farther from our vessel, I implore,  
The coursers drive ; but lash them to the shore. 225

Too long thy father would his friend detain ;  
Dread his proffer'd kindness, urg'd in vain.



The heroë paus'd, and ponder'd this request,  
While love and duty warr'd within his breast.

At length resolv'd he turn'd his ready hand,

230

And lash'd his panting coursers to the strand.

There, while within the poop with care he stor'd

The regal presents of the Spartan lord ;

With speed be gone (said he) call ev'ry mate,

Ere yet to Nestor I the tale relate :

235

v. 226. *Too long thy father would his friend detain.*]

This has been objected against, as contrary to the promise of Telemachus, who assured Menelaus that he would acquaint Nestor with his great friendship and hospitality; Is he therefore not guilty of falshood, by embarking immediately without fulfilling his promise? Eustathius answers, that the prodigy of the eagle occasions this alteration, and that the not fulfilling his promise is to be ascribed to accident and necessity. But the words of Telemachus sufficiently justify his veracity; they are of the plural number *καταλιζομεν*, I and Pisistratus will inform Nestor of your hospitality: This promise he leaves to be performed by Pisistratus, who returns directly to Nestor. Others blame Telemachus as unpolite, in leaving Nestor without any acknowledgment for his civilities. Dacier has recourse to the command of Minerva, and to the prodigy of the eagle, for his vindication: he is commanded by the gods to return immediately, and therefore not blameable for complying with their injunctions. But perhaps it is a better reason to say, that the nature of the poem requires such a conduct; the action of the *Odyssey* stands still till the return of Telemachus (whatever happens to him in Pyle being foreign to it) and therefore Homer shews his judgment, in precipitating the actions of Telemachus, rather than trifling away the time while the story sleeps, only to shew a piece of complaisance and ceremony.

'Tis true, the fervor of his gen'rous heart  
 Brooks no repulse, nor could'st thou soon depart :  
 Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find,  
 In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.  
 But when arriv'd he thy return shall know, 240  
 How will his breast with honest fury glow ?  
 This said, the founding strokes his horses fire,  
 And soon he reach'd the palace of his fire.

Now (cry'd Telemachus) with speedy care  
 Hoise ev'ry sail, and ev'ry oar prepare. 245  
 Swift as the word his willing mates obey,  
 And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.

Mean time the prince with sacrifice adores  
 Minerva, and her guardian aid implores ;  
 When lo ! a wretch ran breathless to the shore, 250  
 New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.  
 A seer he was, from great Melampus sprung,  
 Melampus, who in Pylos flourish'd long,

v. 252.—*From great Melampus sprung.*] There is some obscurity in this genealogical history. Melampus was a prophet, he lived in Pylos, and was a person of great wealth ; his uncle Neleus seized his riches, and detained them a whole year, to oblige him to recover his herds detained by Iphyclus in Phylace ; he failed in the attempt, and was kept in prison by Iphyclus, the son of Phylacus. Bias, the brother of Melampus, was in love with Pero the daughter of Neleus ; Neleus, to engage Melampus more strongly in the enterprize, promises to give Pero in marriage to his brother Bias, upon the recovery of his herds from Iphyclus. At length Iphyclus releases Melampus from his prison, upon his discovering to him how

'Till urg'd by wrongs a foreign realm he chose,

Far from the hateful cause of all his woes.

Neleus his treasures one long year detains ;

As long, he groan'd in Phylachus his chains :

Mean time, what anguish and what rage combin'd,

For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind !

Yet 'scap'd he death ; and vengeful of his wrong

To Pylos drove the lowing herds along :

Then (Neleus vanquish'd, and consign'd the fair

To Bias' arms) he sought a foreign air ;

Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,

There form'd his empire ; there his palace rose.

From him Antiphates and Mantius came :

The first begot Oicleus, great in fame,

And he Amphiaras, immortal name !

The people's saviour, and divinely wise,

Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,

Yet short his date of life ! by female pride he dies.

he might have an heir to succeed to his dominions, and rewards him with restoring the herds of Neleus : then Neleus retracts his promise, and refuses to give his daughter Pero to Bias the brother of Melampus ; upon this Neleus and Melampus quarrel, and engaging in a single combat, Neleus is vanquished, and Melampus retires to Argos. See lib. XI. v. 350, etc. and the annotations, note 23.

v. 270. *Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies.] Yet short his date of life ! by female pride he dies.]*

The poet means Eryphyle, who, being bribed with a golden bracelet by Polinices, persuaded her husband Amphiaras to go to the Theban war, where he lost his life. This is a remarkable passage : though he was loved by

From Mantius Clitus, whom Aurora's love  
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above :

And Polyphides on whom Phœbus shone  
With fullest rays, Amphiaras now gone ; 275

Jupiter and Apollo, yet he reached not to old age. Is a short life the greatest instance of the love of the gods ? Plato quotes the verse to this purpose. 'The life of man is so loaded with calamity, that it is an instance of the favour of heaven to take the burden from us with speed.' The same author in Axiochus (if that dialogue be his) asserts, that the gods, having a perfect insight into human affairs, take speedily to themselves those whom they love. Thus when Trophonius and Agamedes had built a temple to Apollo, they prayed to receive a blessing the most beneficial to mankind : the god granted their prayers, and they were both found dead the next morning. Thus likewise the priestesses of Juno, when her two sons had yoked themselves to her chariot, and drawn her for the greater expedition to the temple, prayed to the goddesses to reward their filial piety ; and they both died that night. This agrees with the expression of Menander, he whom the gods love dies young.

Ὁν οἱ θεοὶ φιλεῖσιν, ἀποθνήσκει νέος.

v. 272. ———— *Aurora's love*

*Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above.]*

There is nothing more common than such accounts of men being carried away by goddesses, in all the Greek poets ; and yet what offends more against credibility ? The poets invented these fables merely out of compliment to the dead. When any person happened to be drowned in a river ; if a man, some water nymph stole him ; if a woman, she was seized to be the wife of the river god. If any were lost at sea, Neptune or some of the sea gods or goddesses had taken them to their beds. But to speak to the present purpose ; if any person died



In Hyperesia's groves he made abode,  
 And taught mankind the counsels of the god.  
 From him sprung Theoclymenus, who found  
 (The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)

in the fields, and his body happened not to be found, if he was murdered and buried, or devoured by wild beasts, so that no account was heard of his death, he was immediately imagined to be taken from the earth by some deity who was in love with his beauty. Thus Clitus being lost in his morning sports, like Orion while he was hunting, he was fabled to be carried to heaven by Aurora; being lost at the time of the morning, over which that deity presides,

v. 278. *From him sprung Theoclymenus*——] We have had a long genealogical digression to introduce Theoclymenus: I fear the whole passage will prove distasteful to an English palate, it not being capable of any ornaments of poetry. I could wish Homer had omitted or shortened such passages, though they might be useful in his age; for by such honourable insertions he made his court to the best families in Greece. It is true the story is told concisely, and this occasions some obscurity; distance of time as well as place, makes us see all objects somewhat confusedly and indistinctly. In the days of Homer these stories were universally known, and consequently wanted no explication; the obscurity therefore is not to be charged upon Homer, but to time, which has defaced and worn away some parts of the impression, and made the images less discernible,

The use the poet makes of the adventure of Theoclymenus, is to give encouragement to Telemachus; he assists him with his advice, and by his gift of prophecy explains to him a prodigy in the conclusion of this book. By this method he connects it with the main action, in giving Telemachus assurances that his affairs hasten to a re-establishment. Besides, these short relations are valuable, as



Telemachus: whom, as to heav'n he prest, 280

His ardent vows, the stranger thus address'd.

O thou! that dost thy happy course prepare

With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r;

By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid;

By all the lives of these; thy own dear head, 285

Declare sincerely to no foe's demand

Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

they convey to posterity brief histories of antient facts and families that are extant no where else.

v. 287. *Declare——thy name and lineage, etc.*]

These questions may be thought somewhat extraordinary; for what apparent reason is there for this fugitive to be told the name and parents of Telemachus? but the interrogations are very material; he makes them to learn if Telemachus or his father are friends to the person slain by his hand; if they were, instead of sailing with him, he would have reason to fly from him, as from a person who might take away his life by the laws of the country. Thus in the Hebrew law, Numb. xxxv. 9. The revenger of blood (ὁ ἀρχισύων, or *propinquus*) shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him. But the Jews had cities of refuge, to which the murderers fled as to a sanctuary: the Greeks in like manner, if the homicide fled into a voluntary exile, permitted him to be in security till the murder was atoned, either by fulfilling a certain time of banishment, or by a pecuniary mulct or expiation.

I will only further remark the conciseness of these interrogations of Theoclymenus; he asks four questions in a breath, in the compass of one line; his apprehensions of being pursued give him no leisure to expatiate. Homer judiciously adapts his poetry to the circumstances of the murderer, a man in fear being in great haste to be in security. Telemachus answers with equal brevity, being un-

Prepare then, said Telemachus, to know  
 A tale from falsehood free, not free from woe.  
 From Ithaca, of royal birth I came, 290  
 And great Ulysses (ever honour'd name !)  
 Was once my fire : though now for ever lost  
 In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost !  
 Whose fate enquiring, through the world we rove ;  
 The last, the wretched proof of filial love. 295

The stranger then. Nor shall I ought conceal,  
 But the dire secret of my fate reveal.

Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I flew ;  
 Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue  
 With unrelenting rage, and force from home 300  
 The blood stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.

But bear, oh bear me o'er yon azure flood ;  
 Receive the suppliant ! spare my destin'd blood !

Stranger (reply'd the prince) securely rest  
 Affianc'd in our faith ; henceforth our guest . 305

Thus affable, Ulysses' godlike heir  
 Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring spear :  
 He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,  
 And by his side the guest accepted plac'd.

der a necessity to finish his voyage in the night to avoid the ambush of the suitors. For this reason Homer shortens the relation, and complies with the exigency of Telemachus ; with this further view, to unite the subordinate story of Telemachus with that of Ulysses, it being necessary to hasten to the chief action, and without delay carry on the main design of the Odyssey in the re-establishment of Ulysses.

The chief his orders gives : the obedient band 310

With with due observance wait the chief's command :

With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind

The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.

Minerva calls ; the ready gales obey

With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea. 315

Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,

When thick'ning darkness clos'd the doubtful day ;

v. 316. *Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis*—etc.]

This whole passage has been greatly corrupted ; one line is omitted in all our editions of Homer, and the verses themselves are printed erroneously ; for thus they stand, lib. 8. p. 539. of Strabo's Geography.

Βάν δὲ παρὰ Κρήνης, καὶ Χαλκίδα καλλιγείθρον,

Δύσαστό τ' ἥλιος σκιάωντο τι πᾶσαι ἀγυιαί

Ἡ δὲ Φιδᾶς ἐπήβαλλεν ἀγαλλομένη διδὸς ὄρεα.

The first line is added from Strabo : thus in Latin,

*Praterierunt Crunos, et Chalcida fluentis amœnam.*

He writes, ἀγαλλομένη, for ἐπαγομένη : and Φιδᾶς, instead of Φιδᾶς. The course that Telemachus steered is thus explained by the same author : He first sailed northwardly as far as Elis, then he turned towards the east, avoiding the direct course to Ithaca, to escape the ambush of the suitors, who lay between Samos and Ithaca. Then he passed the Echinades (called Θοαί, that is, δέξιναι, or sharp-pointed by Homer. See Strabo, lib. 10. They are called Oxias by Pliny) lying near the gulph of Corinth, and the mouths of Achelous ; thus leaving Ithaca on the east, and passing it, he alters his course again, sails northwardly between Ithaca and Acarnania, and lands on the coast opposite to the Cephallenian ocean, where the suitors formed their ambush. The places mentioned by Homer lie in

The silver Phæa's glitt'ring rills they lost,  
 And skim'd along by Elis' sacred coast.  
 Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind,  
 And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

Mean-time the king, Eumæus, and the rest,  
 Sate in the cottage, at their rural feast :  
 The banquet past, and satiate ev'ry man,  
 To try his host Ulysses thus began.

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your guest ;  
 The last I purpose in your walls to rest :  
 To-morrow for myself I must provide,  
 And only ask your counsel, and a guide :

this order, Crumi, Chalcis, and Phea : and are all rivers of small note, or rather brooks, as Strabo expresses it : *οὐκ ἔστι ποταμῶν ὀνόματα, ἀλλὰ ὄχι ὄχαι.*

It is highly probable that Phææ, and not Pheræ, is the true reading ; for Pheræ lay in Messenia, and not in Elis, as Strabo writes, and was in possession of Agamemnon ; for he mentions that city amongst the seven which he promises Achilles, in the ninth book of the Iliad.

*Sev'n ample cities shall confess thy sway,  
 Thee Enope, and Pheræ thee obey.*

If it had not been under his dominion, how could he transfer the right to Achilles ? besides, it would be absurd to join Phææ directly with Chalcis, when the one was in Messenia, the other in Elis ; this would make the course of Telemachus's navigation unintelligible, if Elis and Messenia were confounded in the relation, and used promiscuously without order or regularity.

I will only add that Strabo in the 20th book of his Geography, instead of *Καλλιρρόην* reads *πτερίον* perhaps through a slip of his memory.

patient to roam the street, by hunger led. 330

and bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.

There in Ulysses' roof I may relate

Ulysses' wand'rings to his royal mate;

Or mingling with the suitors haughty train,

Not undeserving, some support obtain. 335

Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,

Patron of industry and manual arts:

Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,

The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend;

v. 336. *Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,*

*Patron of industry and manual arts: ]*

Mercury was the servant and minister of the gods, and was feigned to be the patron of all persons of the like station upon earth; it was supposed to be by his favour that all servants and attendants were successful in their several functions. In this view the connexion will be easy, I will go (says Ulysses) and offer my service to the suitors, and by the favour of Mercury, who gives success to persons of my condition, shall prosper; for no man is better able to execute the offices of attendance, than myself.' It may be objected, that these functions are unworthy of the character, and beneath the dignity, of an hero: but Ulysses is obliged to act in his assumed, not real character; as a beggar, not as a king. Athenæus (lib. i. p. 18.) vindicates Ulysses in another manner. 'Men (says he) in former ages performed their own offices, and gloried in their dexterity in such employments. Thus Homer describes Ulysses as the most dextrous man living, in ordering wood for the fire, and in the arts of cookery.' But it is no more derogation to him to put on the appearance of a beggar, than it was to Pallas to assume that of a swain, as she frequently does throughout the Odyssey.



To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame ;  
 Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.  
 Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,  
 Whom fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.

Alas ! (Eumæus with a sigh rejoin'd)  
 How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind ?  
 If on that godless race thou wouldst attend,  
 Fate owes thee sure a miserable end !  
 Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,  
 And pull descending vengeance, from on high.  
 Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast :  
 A blooming train in rich embroid'ry drest,  
 With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,  
 And smiling round celestial youth attends.  
 Stay then : no eye askance beholds thee here ;  
 Sweet is thy converse to each social ear ;  
 Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,  
 Till good Telemachus accepts his guest  
 With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,  
 And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

v. 348. *Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky.* The sense of this passage appears to me very obvious; Dacier renders it, *whose violence and insolence is so great, that they regard not the gods, and that they attack even the heavens.* I should rather chuse to understand the words in the more plain and easy construction : Grotius is of this judgment, and thinks they bear the same import as these in Gen. xviii. 21. *I will go down and see if they have done according to the cry which is come unto heaven ;* and indeed there is a great similitude between the expressions.

340 To him the man of woes. O gracious Jove ! 360  
 Reward this stranger's hospitable love,  
 Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,  
 Cheers the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.  
 Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,  
 345 A life of wand'ring is the greatest woe : 365  
 On all their weary ways wait care and pain,  
 And pine and penury, a meagre train.  
 To such a man since harbour you afford,  
 Relate the farther fortunes of your lord ;  
 350 What cares his mother's tender breast engage, 370  
 And sire, forsaken on the verge of age ;

v. 370. *What cares his mother's tender breast engage,  
 And sire, forsaken on the verge of age.]*

355 These questions may seem to be needless, because Ulysses  
 had been fully acquainted with the story of Laertes, and  
 the death of his mother Anticlea, by the shade of Tiresias ;  
 but Ulysses personates a stranger, and to carry on that  
 character, pretends to be unacquainted with all the affairs  
 of his own family. I cannot affirm that such frequent re-  
 petitions of the same circumstances are beautiful in Homer ;  
 the retirement of Laertes has been frequently mentioned,  
 and the death of Anticlea related in other parts of the O-  
 dyssy ; however necessary such reiterated accounts may  
 be, I much question whether they will prove entertaining :  
 Homer himself in this place seems to apprehend it ; for  
 Eumæus passes over the questions made by Ulysses with a  
 very short answer, and enlarges upon other circumstances,  
 relating to his family and affairs, to give (as Eustathius ob-  
 serves) variety to his poetry. But this conduct is very  
 judicious upon another account : it lets Ulysses into the  
 knowledge of his condition, and by it he is able to take his  
 measures with the greater certainty, in order to bring a-

Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,  
Or range the house of darkness and of death ?

To whom the swain. Attend what you enquire.

Laertes lives, the miserable fire,

375

Lives, but implores of ev'ry pow'r to lay

The burden down, and wishes for the day.

Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,

Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,

Sole, and all comfortless he wastes away,

380

Old-age untimely posting ere his day.

She too, sad mother ! for Ulysses lost

Pin'd out her bloom, and vanish'd to a ghost.

(So dire a fate, ye righteous gods ! avert,

From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart !)

385

While yet she was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,

Her pleasing converse minister'd relief :

With Ctimene, her youngest daughter, bred,

One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.

But when the softly-stealing pace of time

390

Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,

To Samos' isle she sent the wedded fair ;

Me to the fields, to tend the rural care ;

about his own re-establishment. This is a demonstration that the objection of Rapiñ is without foundation ; he calls these interviews between Ulysses and Eumæus mere idle fables, invented solely for amusement, and contributing nothing to the action of the *Odyssey* ; but the contrary is true, for Ulysses directs his course according to these informations.

Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,

Nor less the darling object of her love.

395

Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercast,

Yet providence deserts me not at last:

My present labours food and drink procure,

And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.

Small is the comfort from the queen to hear

400

Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;

Blank and discountenanc'd the servants stand,

Nor dare to question where the proud command:

v. 399. *And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.*]

This verse,

Τῶν ἴφαγόντ', ἱπλέοντι, καὶ αἰδοίοισιν ἴδωκα.

has been traduced into the utmost obscenity; Eustathius indicates the expression: it means 'I have sustained myself with meat and drink by an honest industry, and have got wherewithal to relieve virtue that wants.' He interprets αἰδοίοισιν, by ἀνδράσιν αἰδῶς ἀξίοις; or *men worthy of regard and honour*: ξήνοις καὶ ἰκέταις. The following words,

Ὅν μείλιχόν ἐστιν ἀκῶσαι

Ὅντ' ἴπος, ὅτ' ἴτι ἔργον

are capable of a double construction, and imply either that *I take no delight in hearing of Penelope, she being in distress, and in the power of the suitors*; or that the suitors *to besiege the palace, that it is impossible for me to hear one gentle word from Penelope, or receive one obliging action from her hand*. The preference is submitted to the reader's judgment; they both contain images of tenderness and humanity.

No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs ;  
 Want feeds not there, where luxury devours,  
 Nor harbours charity where riot reigns :  
 Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains.

The suff'ring chief at this began to melt ;  
 And, oh Eumæus ! thou (he cries) hast felt  
 The spite of fortune too ! her cruel hand  
 Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land !  
 Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,  
 To early wants ! a man of miseries !  
 Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare :  
 Sunk the fair city by the rage of war,  
 Where once thy parents dwelt ? or did they keep,  
 In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep ?  
 So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,  
 Rude Pyrates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main ?  
 Doom'd a fair prize to grace some prince's board,  
 The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.

If then my fortunes can delight my friend,  
 A story fruitful of events, attend ;  
 Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,  
 And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ.  
 Long nights the now-declining year bestows ;  
 A part we consecrate to soft repose,

v. 426. *Long nights the now-declining year bestows, etc.*  
 From hence we may conclude, that the return of Ulysses  
 was probably in the decline of the year, in the latter part  
 of the autumn, and not in the summer ; the nights then  
 being short cannot be called Νύκτες ἀνίσταται. Euler  
 thus.



A part in pleasing talk we entertain;  
 For too much rest itself becomes a pain.  
 Let those, whom sleep invites, the call obey, 430  
 Their cares resuming with the dawning day:  
 Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd  
 Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind;  
 Review the series of our lives, and taste  
 The melancholy joy of evils past: 435  
 For he who much has suffer'd, much will know;  
 And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.

Above Ortygia lies an isle of fame,  
 Far hence remote, and Syria is the name;

v. 429. ——— *Too much rest itself becomes a pain.*] This aphorism is agreeable to nature and experience; the same thing is asserted by Hippocrates; *Sleep or watchfulness, when excessive, becomes diseases*; too much sleep occasions an excess of perspiration, and consequently weakens and dissipates the animal spirits. Dacier.

v. 434. ——— *and taste*  
*The melancholy joy of evils past.*]

There is undoubtedly a great pleasure in the remembrance of past sufferings: nay, calamity has this advantage over prosperity; an evil when past turns into a comfort; but a past pleasure, though innocent, leaves in its room an anxiety for the want of it, and if it be a guilty pleasure, a remorse. The reason (observes Eustathius) why past evils delight, is from the consciousness of the praise due to our prudence and patience under them, from the sense of our felicity in being delivered from them, and from gratitude to divine providence, which has delivered us. It is the joy of good men to believe themselves the favourites of heaven.

v. 438. Ortygia.] This is an antient name of Delos, so called from ὄρτυξ, a Quail, from the great numbers of

(There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace

440

The sun's diurnal, and his annual race.)

those birds found upon that island. Lycophron, in his obscure way of writing, calls it ὄρνιξ πτερυμνήη or the *winged quail*; perhaps from the fable of Asteria being turned into that bird in her flight from Jupiter, and giving name to the island from the transformation she suffered upon it. It is one of the Cyclades, and lies in the Ægean ocean. Syria, or Syros, is another small island lying eastward of Ithaca, according to true geography.

v. 440. *There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace  
The sun's diurnal, and his annual race.]*

The words in Homer are τροπαὶ ἡλίου, or *solis conversiones*. Monsieur Perault insults the poet as ignorant of geography, for placing Syros under the Tropic; an error (says he) which commentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourse to a sun dial of Pherecydes 'n which the motions of the sun (the τροπαὶ ἡλίου) were designed. The last defence would indeed be ridiculous, since Pherecydes flourished three hundred years after the time of Homer: no one (replies monsieur Boileau) was ever at any difficulty about the sense of this passage; Eustathius proves that τεῖπεσθαι signifies the same as δύει, and denotes the setting of the sun; so that the words mean, that Syros is situate above Ortygia, on that side where the sun sets, or westerly, πρὸς τὰ δυτικὰ μέρη τῆς Ὀρτυγίας. It is true, Eustathius mentions a bower, Σπίλαιον, in which the conversions of the sun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate Homer; but Bochart and others affirm, that Eustathius is in an error, and that Syros is so far from lying to the west, or πρὸς τροπαὶς ἡλίου, that it bears an eastern position both with respect to Ithaca and Delos. How is this objection to be answered? Bochart p. 411. of his *Geographia sacra*, explains it by having recourse to the bower mentioned by Eustathius in which the motions of the sun were drawn. Pherecydes (says Herfychius Milesius) having collected the writings of the Phœ-

Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to keep

The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep;

nicians, from the use of them alone without any instructor, became famous in the world by the strength of his own genius: and Laertius writes, that an Heliotrope made by him was preserved in the island of Syros. Thus it is evident, that he borrowed his knowledge from the Phœnicians, and probably his skill in astronomy, they being very expert in that science, by reason of its use in their navigation. Why then might there not be a machine which exhibited the motions of the sun, made by the Phœnicians, and why might not Homer be acquainted with it? It is probable that Pherecydes took his pattern from this Heliotrope, which, being one of the greatest rarities of antiquity, might give a great reputation to Syros, and consequently was worthy to be celebrated by Homer, the great preserver of antiquities. *Fallitur igitur*, (says Bochart) *Eustathius, cum vult intelligi, quasi sita sit Syrus, ad occidentales partes Deli; cum contra Deli ad ortum sit Syrus, non ad occiduum; et rem sic se habere ex ipso Homero patet, apud quem Eumæus in Ithaca, Syriam asserit esse trans Delum, quo nihil dici potuit falsius, si Syrus sit ad occidentem Deli.* If this answer appears to any person too studied and abstruse, the difficulty may be solved, by supposing Eumæus speaking of Delos as it lay with respect to Syrus, before he was carried from it; for instance, if Syrus lies on the east of Delos to a man in Ithaca both Ithaca and Delos will lie on the west of Syrus to one of that island; I would therefore imagine that Eumæus speaks as a native of Syrus, and not as a sojourner in Ithaca, and then Delos will lie towards the sun-setting, or *πρὸς ἡλίου Τρόπας*: but this last I only propose as a conjecture, not presuming to offer it as a decision.

v. 442. *Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to keep  
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep.*]

It is probable that Homer was well acquainted with the nature of this island, and that it really enjoyed an admir-

Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,  
 And her rich vallies wave with golden corn. 445  
 No want, no famine the glad natives know,  
 Nor sink by sickness to the shades below ;  
 But when a length of years unnerves the strong,  
 Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.  
 They bend the silver bow with tender skill, 450  
 And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.  
 Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,  
 Where two fair cities rise with equal pride,  
 But both in constant peace one prince obey,  
 And Ctesius there, my father, holds the sway. 455  
 Freight'd, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort  
 A ship of Sidon anchor'd in our port ;

rable temperature of air, and therefore was exceedingly healthful ; the fertility of the soil proves the happiness of the air, which would naturally free the inhabitants from the maladies arising from a less salubrious situation. It is for this reason that they are said to be slain by Diana and Apollo. All deaths that were sudden, and without sickness, were ascribed to those deities. Bochart (p. 410.) tells us, that the name of Syrus was given to the island by the Phœnicians ; *Asira* or *Sira* signifying *rich*, in their language ; or rather it was so called from *Sura* or *Asura*, signifying *happy* ; either of these derivations fully denote the excellence both of the soil and air : and that this name is of Phœnician extract is probable from the words of Homer, who assures us that they stayed a whole year upon this island, and consequently had opportunity to know the healthfulness and fertility of it.

v. 457. *A ship of Sidon*——.] Here is a full testimony, that the Phœnicians were remarkable for arts and navigation over all the world. They were expelled from

What time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,  
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.

their country by Joshua, as Bochart informs us, and then settling along the sea-coasts, they spread over all the Mediterranean, and by degrees sent out colonies into Europe, Asia, and Afric. That they were in Afric appears from Procopius, where he mentions a pillar with a Phœnician inscription. Ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν οἱ φύγοντες ἀπὸ προσηπύῃ Ἰήσῳ τὴν λεγούσαν Νάνη; *We are a people that fly from Joshua the son of Nun, the robber; they gave him that title out of resentment for their dispossession.* The character they bear in the scriptures agrees with this in Homer. Isaiah xxiii. 2. *The merchants of Sidon, which pass over the seas; and it likewise appears from the scriptures, that they excelled in all arts of embroidery, and works of curiosity.*

v. 458. *What time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,*

*Skill'd in rich works a woman of their land.]*

I was surprized to find that Eustathius mistook this Phœnician woman for the mother of Eumæus; she herself tells us she was only his governess.

Παῖδα γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἱῶος ἐνὶ μεγάροις ἀσιτάλλω.

It is not probable that Eumæus would have painted his own mother in the dress of an adultress, and an abandoned traytres: nay, he directly distinguishes his mother from this Phœnician in the sequel of the story (where he calls her πότνια μητήρ, or his *venerable mother*;) and when he speaks of the Phœnician, he constantly calls her γυναῖς not μητήρ. Nor indeed could he have called her πότνια at all, if she had not been a person of such a detestable character. Spondanus adopts the mistake of Eustathius, and endeavours to vindicate her from the manner of her frailty. *Modeste decepta donis, etc. ut eorum libidini obsecundaret,* "it was a modest adultery, she being deceived by "bribes to yield to their solicitation." However erroneous this opinion is, yet it shews Spondanus to be a kind and complaisant casuist.



This nymph, where anchor'd the Phœnician train, 460

To wash her robes descending to the main,

A smooth-tongu'd sailor won her to his mind ;

(For love deceives the best of woman-kind.)

A sudden trust from sudden liking grew ;

She told her name, her race, and all she knew. 465

I too (she cry'd) from glorious Sidon came,

My father Arybas, of wealthy fame ;

But snatch'd by pyrates from my native place,

The Taphians fold me to this man's embrace.

Haste then (the false designing youth reply'd) 470

Haste to thy country ; love shall be thy guide :

Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast,

For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.

" Swear first (she cry'd) ye sailors ! to restore

" A wretch in safety to her native shore. 475

Swift as she ask'd, the ready sailors swore.

She then proceeds : Now let our compact made

Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,

Nor near me any of your crew descry'd

By road frequented, or by fountain-side. 480

Be silence still our guard. The monarch's spies

(For watchful age is ready to surmise)

Are still at hand ; and this reveal'd must be

Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.

Your vessel loaded, and your traffic past, 485

Dispatch a wary messenger with haste :

Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,

And more, the infant offspring of the king.

Him, childlike wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,  
A noble prize! and to your ship convey. 490

Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road,  
A year they traffic, and their vessel load.

Their stores compleat, and ready now to weigh,  
A spy was sent their summons to convey :

An artist to my father's palace came, 495  
With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame :

Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,  
They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.

He took th' occasion as they stood intent,  
Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went. 500

He strait pursu'd, and seiz'd my willing arm ;  
Follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.

Three golden goblets in the porch she found,

The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd)  
Lid in her fraudful bosom, these she bore : 505

Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore.

v. 502. *I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.*] There is a little incredibility in this narration : for if Eumæus was such an infant as he is described to be at the time when he was betrayed by his Phœnician governess, what probability is there that he should be able to retain all these particulars so circumstantially? He was not of an age capable of making, or remembering so many observations. The answer is, that he afterwards learned them from Laertes, who bought him of the Phœnicians : and no doubt they told him the quality of Eumæus, to enhance the price and make the better bargain. It is also natural to imagine, that Eumæus, when he grew up to manhood, would be inquisitive after his own birth and fortunes, and therefore might probably learn these particulars from Laertes. Eustathius.

Arriving then, where tilting on the tides  
 Prepar'd to launch the freighted vessel rides ;  
 Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep  
 With level oar along the glassy deep. 510  
 Six calmy days and six smooth nights we sail,  
 And constant Jove supply'd the gentle gale.  
 The sev'nth, the fraudful wretch, no cause descry'd,  
 Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow, dy'd.  
 Down dropt the caitiff corse, a worthless load, 515  
 Down to the deep ; there roll'd the future food  
 Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood.  
 An helpless infant I remain'd behind ;  
 Thence born to Ithaca by wave and wind ;  
 Sold to Laertes, by divine command, 520  
 And now adopted to a foreign land.

[v. 511. *Six calmy days, etc.*] It is evident from this passage, that it is above six days sail from Ithaca to Syros, though carried with favourable winds. Dacier.

[v. 514. — *Diana's vengeful arrow* —] I would just observe the poetical justice of Homer, in the punishment of this Phœnician. Misfortune generally pursues wickedness, and though we escape the vengeance of man, yet heaven frequently overtakes us when we think we are in security, and death calls us from our impious acquisitions.

[v. 521. *And now adopted to a foreign land.*] Homer has here given us an history of the life of Eumæus ; the Episode contains near an hundred lines, and may seem entirely foreign to the action of the Odyssey. I will not affirm that it is in every respect to be justified. The main story is at a stand ; but we are to consider that this relation takes up but small part of one leisure evening, and that the action cannot proceed till the return of Telemachus.

To him the king. Reciting thus thy cares,  
 My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares:  
 But one choice blessing, such as Jove's high will,  
 Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill : 525  
 Torn from thy country to no hapless end,  
 The gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.  
 Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,  
 (For she needs little) daily bread and wine.  
 While I, so many wandrings past and woes, 530  
 Live but on what thy poverty bestows.  
 So past in pleasing dialogue away  
 The night; then down to short repose they lay;  
 Till radiant rose the messenger of day. }

thus. It is of use to set-off the character of Eumæus, and shew him to be a person of quality, worthy to be an agent in an epic poem, where every character ought to be remote from meanness: so the story has a distant relation to the Odyssey, and perhaps is not to be looked upon merely as an excrescence from the main building, but a small projection to adorn it.

v. 534. *'Till radiant rose the messenger of day.*] This is the morning of the thirty eighth day since the beginning of the Odyssey. It is observable that Telemachus takes more time in his return from Pylos, than in sailing thither from his own country; for in the latter end of the second book he sets sail after sun-setting, and reached Pyle in the morning: here he embarks in the afternoon, and yet arrives not at Ithaca till after break of day. The reason of it is not to be ascribed to a less prosperous wind, but to the greater compass he was obliged to fetch, to escape the ambush of the suitors. In the former voyage he steer'd a direct course; in this, he sails round about to the north of Ithaca, and therefore wastes more time in his voyage to it.

While in the port of Ithaca, the band 535  
Of young Telemachus approach'd the land;

Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,  
And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd:

Then on the breezy shore descending, join  
In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine. 540

When thus the prince: Now each his course pursue;  
I to the fields, and to the city you.

Long absent hence, I dedicate this day  
My swains to visit, and the works survey.

Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies 545  
Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.

Then Theoclymenus: But who shall lend,  
Mean time, protection to thy stranger-friend?

Straight to the queen and palace shall I fly,  
Or yet more distant, to some lord apply? 550

The prince return'd. Renown'd in days of yore  
Has stood our father's hospitable door;

No other roof a stranger shou'd receive,  
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.

But in my absence riot fills the place, 555  
Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face,

From noiseful revel far remote she flies,  
But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes,

No—let Eurymachus receive my guest,  
Of nature courteous, and by far the best; 560

He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,  
And emulates her former husband's fame:

¶. 561. *He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,  
And emulates her former husband's fame.*



With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,  
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.

Thus speaking, on the right up-soar'd in air 565

The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger;

His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;

The clotted feathers scatter'd from above

The words in the original are ἀδυσσῶνος γυναικὶ ἔχει, which may either be rendered, *to obtain the honour of marrying Penelope*, agreeably to the former part of the verse; or it means that Eurymachus has the fairest hopes to marry Penelope, and *obtain the throne or reigns of Ulysses*. Hobbs translates the verse almost obscenely in the former sense:

————— *He best loves my mother,*

*And what my father did, would do the same.*

The former in my judgment is the better construction, especially because it avoids a tautology, and gives a new image in the second part of the verse, very different from the sense expressed in the former part of it. But of all the meanings it is capable of I should prefer this; "That he courts her upon the most honourable principles, and seems desirous to have the honour of Ulysses, by imitating his worth;" and this is agreeable to the character of Eurymachus, which distinguishes him from all the other suitors.

v. 566. *The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger.*]

The augury is thus to be interpreted; Ulysses is the hawk, the suitors the pidgeon; the hawk denotes the valour of Ulysses, being a bird of prey; the pidgeon represents the cowardice of the suitors, that bird being remarkable for her timorous nature. The hawk flies on the right, to denote success to Ulysses.

Homer calls this bird the messenger of Apollo; not that this augury was sent by that deity; (though that be no forced interpretation,) but the expression implies, that

Between the heroe and the vessel pour  
Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r.

570

Th' observing augur took the prince aside,  
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd.

Yon bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,  
Rose ominous, nor flies without a god :

No race but thine shall Ithaca obey,

575

To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the fway.

Succeed the omen, Gods ! (the youth rejoin'd)

Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,

And soon each envy'd happiness attend

The man, who calls Telemachus his friend.

580

the hawk was sacred to Apollo; as the peacock was to Juno, the owl to Pallas, and the eagle to Jupiter. Thus Ælian, anim. lib. 10. c. 14. *Ἀιγυπῖοι τὸν ἱέρακα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τιμᾶν ἵστανται*, etc. and he gives the reason of it, for the hawk is the only bird that is capable to bear the lustre of the sun without inconvenience and difficulty; the same is said of the eagle; but this hawk is reckoned to be of the Aquiline kind. It was death among the Egyptians to kill this bird, because it was dedicated to Apollo.

There is another reason why any bird that was taken notice of by way of augury, may be said to be the messenger of Apollo: that deity presiding over divination.

v. 571. *Th' observing augur took the prince aside.*]

The reason why Theoclymenus withdraws Telemachus, while he interprets the augury, is not apparent at the first view; but he does it out of an apprehension lest he should be overheard by some of the company who might disclose the secret to the suitors, and such a discovery might prove fatal to his own person, or to the fortunes of Telemachus.

Eustathius.

Then to Peiræus——Thou whom time has prov'd  
A faithful servant, by thy prince belov'd !  
Till we returning shall our guest demand,  
Accept this charge, with honour, at our hand.

To this Peiræus ; joyful I obey, 585  
Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.  
The presence of thy guest shall best reward  
(If long thy stay) the absence of my lord.

With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,  
Mount the tall bark, and launch into the sea. 590  
All with obedient haste forsake the shores,  
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.  
Then from the deck the prince his sandals takes ;  
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin shakes.  
They part ; while less'ning from the hero's view, 595  
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew :  
The hero trod the margin of the main,  
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.

v. 581. *Then to Peiræus —— Thou whom time has prov'd, etc.*] We find that Telemachus intended to deliver Theoclymenus to the care of Eurymachus : What then is the reason he so suddenly alters that resolution, and intrusts him to Peiræus ? This is occasioned by the discovery of the skill of Theoclymenus in augury ; he fears lest the suitors should extort some prediction from him that might be detrimental to his affairs, or should he refuse it, to the person of Theoclymenus. Eustathius.

This book comprehends somewhat more than the space of two days and one night ; for the vision appears to Telemachus a little before the dawn, in the night preceding the thirty sixth day, and he lands in Ithaca on the thirty eighth in the morning.

From the ...

1. The first part of the report is a general statement of the purpose of the study and the scope of the work.

1910

THE  
ODYSSEY,

BOOK XVI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.

*Telemachus arriving at the lodge of Eumæus sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses commands him to discover himself to his son. The princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated return, to Ithaca.*

SOON as the morning blush'd along the plains,  
Ulysses, and the monarch of the swains,

v. 1. *Soon as the morning blush'd along the plains, etc.*] This book opens with the greatest simplicity imaginable. Dionysius Halicarnassæus quotes the sixteen first lines to this purpose: The poet, says that author, describes a low and vulgar action, yet gives it an inexpressible sweetness; the ear is pleased with the harmony of the poetry, and yet there is nothing noble in the sentiments. Whence, continues he, does this arise? from the choice of the words, or from the placing of them? No one will affirm that it consists in the choice of the words; for the diction is entirely low and vulgar, so vulgar that a common artificer or peasant, who never studied elocution, would use it in conversation; turn the verses into prose, and this will appear. There are no transpositions, no figures, no variety of dialect, nor any new and studied expressions. Where then is the beauty of the poetry? It must be entirely ascribed to the harmonious juncture and position of the words; and he concludes that the colloca-



Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,  
And forth to pasture send the bristly care.

tion of words has a greater efficacy both in prose and poetry, than the choice. And indeed a judicious disposition of them (like what is feigned of Minerva in this book) makes a mean, deformed, and vulgar period rise, like Ulysses from beggary, into pomp and dignity. This may be exemplified from the rules of mechanic arts: an architect, when he gathers his materials for a building, has these three things chiefly in view: first, with what piece of stone, wood, &c. a correspondent piece will best agree; next he considers their several formations, and how it will best stand in the structure: and lastly, if any part of the materials suits not with the allotted place, he rejects it or new shapes it, till it agrees with the whole work: the same care is to be taken by a good writer: he is first to consider what noun or verb is to be joined to other nouns or verbs so fitly, as not possibly to be placed more conveniently; for a promiscuous connecting of words indiscriminately spoils both prose and poetry: Next he considers the frame and turn of the verb or noun, and how it will stand in the place he allots it; and if it suits not exactly, he changes it, sometimes by varying the numbers, sometimes the cases, and at other times the genders: And lastly, if a word prove so stubborn as not to bend to the level of the period, he intirely rejects it, and introduces another that preserves a due conformity; or at least, if an inharmonious word be necessary, he places it so judiciously between the more agreeable and tuneful words, that their harmony steals away our imagination from observing the roughness of the others: like wise generals, who in ordering the ranks of their soldiers, strengthen the weaker files by sustaining them with the stronger; and by this method render the whole invincible. See likewise cap. 32. of Longinus, of the disposition of words.

v. 3. ——— *their meal prepare.*] The word in the original is *ἀγισον*, which here denotes very evidently the

The prince's near approach the dogs descry,

5

And fawning round his feet, confess their joy.

morning repast: it is used but in one other place in all Homer in this sense: Iliad. lib. 24. v. 124.

Ἐσθυμένως ἐπίνοντο καὶ ἐντυνοντο ἄριστον

But we are not therefore to imagine that this was an usual meal; Homer in other places expresses it by δειπνον, as is observed by Athenæus, lib. 1.

Οἱ δ' ἄρα δειπνον ἔλονται ἀπὸ δ' αὐτῶ θωρήσσοντο.

"At the dawn of the day they took repast and armed themselves for battle." The Greeks had three customary meals, which are distinctly mentioned by Pælemædes in Æschylus,

Ἄριστα, δειπνα, θέρπαι' αἰρεῖσθαι τρίτα.

Homer, adds Athenæus, mentions a fourth repast, lib. 17. of the Odyssey:

—σὺ δ' ἔρχο δειλιήσας.

This the Romans called *commessationem*, we a collation, a repast taken, as the same author explains it, between dinner and supper; the word is derived ἀπὸ τῆς δειλῆς ὥρας, or the evening twilight. But Athenæus refutes himself, lib. 5. p. 193. I have already, says he, observed that the ancients eat thrice-a-day; and it is ridiculous to imagine that they eat four times, from these words of Homer,

—σὺ δ' ἔρχο δειλιήσας.

For that expression meant only that Eumæus should return in the evening, δειλιον διατρίψας χρόνον. But this is not the full import of the word δειλιήσας, for it undoubtedly means, To take the evening repast or supper, as is evident from the conclusion of the seventeenth book of the Odyssey: *Return*, says Telemachus to Eumæus,

Their gentle blandishment the king survey'd,  
 Heard his resounding step, and instant said :

Some well-known friend (Eumæus) bends this way;  
 His steps I hear; the dogs familiar play.  
 While yet he spoke, the prince advancing drew  
 Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.  
 Transported from his seat Eumæus sprung,  
 Drop'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung :

*but first take refreshment*; and Eumæus accordingly eats, and the poet immediately adds, *because the evening was come*, or ἐνέλυθε δειπλὸν ἡμᾶς. However in no sense can this word be brought to prove that the Greeks eat four times in the day: but if any person will imagine that it signifies in that place an immediate meal, all that can be gathered from it is, that Telemachus out of kindness to Eumæus commands him to eat before the usual hour of repast, before he leaves his palace: but Hesychius rightly interprets it by τὸ δειπλὸν λαβὼν ἑμβόρῃα, that is, *eating his supper*: for as δειπνᾶν and ἄρισται signify the dinner, so δάειπον and δειπλὸν denote the time of supper promiscuously.

I will add no more, but refer the reader for a full explanation of δειπνᾶν, ἄρισται and δειπλὸν, to lib. 8. quest. 6. of Plutarch's Symposiacs.

V. 14. *Drop'd the full bowl*——] In the original it is, Eumæus dropped the bowl as he tempered it with water. It was customary not to drink wine unmixed amongst the ancients; there was no certain proportion observed in the mixture; some to one vessel of wine poured in two of water, others to two of wine, five of water. Homer tells us that the wine of Maron was so strong as to require twenty measures of water to one of wine; but perhaps this is spoken hyperbolically, to shew the uncommon strength of it. The Lacedæmonians used to boil

Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye  
 The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.  
 As some fond fire who ten long winters grieves,  
 From foreign climes an only son receives,  
 (Child of his age) with strong paternal joy  
 Forward he springs, and clasps the favourite boy :  
 To round the youth his arms Eumæus spread,  
 As if the grave had given him from the dead.

And is it thou ? my ever dear delight !  
 O art thou come to bless my longing sight !  
 Never, I never hop'd to view this day,  
 When o'er the waves you plow'd the desp'rate way.  
 Enter, my child ! beyond my hopes restor'd,  
 O give these eyes to feast upon their lord,

their wine till the fifth part was consumed, and then keep-  
 ing it four years, drank it : but sometimes the Grecians  
 drank it without water (but this they called reproachful-  
 ly ἐπισκυθίσαι, or to act like a Scythian, from whom they  
 borrowed the custom.) It was usual even for children  
 to drink wine thus tempered, amongst the Grecians ; thus  
 in this book Eurymachus

——ἐπὶσχέ δὲ οἶνον ἐρυθρόν.

And Phoenix in the 9th of the Iliads, speaking of Achilles:

——οἶνον ἐπίσχον

Πολλάκι μοι κατεδύσατο.

At Athens there was an altar erected to Bacchus ὄρεθιος,  
 because from thus tempering the wine men returned up-  
 right or sober from entertainments ; and a law was en-  
 acted by Amphitryon, and afterwards revived by Solon,  
 that no unmixed wine should be drank at any entertain-  
 ment.

Enter, oh seldom seen ! for lawless pow'rs  
Too much detain thee from these sylvan bow'rs.

The prince reply'd ; Eumæus, I obey ;  
To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.  
But say, if in the court the queen reside  
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride ?

v. 33. ——— *if in the court the queen reside  
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride ?*]

Homer here makes use of a proverbial expression. It may thus be literally translated.

Or say if obstinate no more to wed,  
She dooms to spiders nets th' imperial bed ?

Telemachus means by this question, if Penelope be determined no more to marry ; for the marriage bed was esteemed so sacred, that upon the decease or absence of the husband, it remained unused.

Eustathius quotes the same expression from other authors of antiquity ; thus Hesiod,

Ἐκ δ' ἀργίων ἱλασείας ἀράχνια.

“ You shall clear the vessels from spiders webs ;” meaning, that “ You shall have so full employment for your vessels, that the spiders shall no more spread their looms there.” And another poet, praying for peace, wishes spiders may weave their nets upon the soldiers arms ; ἕτερος ποιήτης ἐθέλων εἰρήνην ἔυξασθαι, ἀράχνας ἐπίνχεται νήματα ὑφάναι τοῖς ὅπλοις. Thus we find amongst the Greeks it was an expression of dignity, and applied to great and serious occasions. I am not certain that it is so used by the Romans. Catullus uses it jocosely, speaking of his empty purse.

————— *nam tui Catuli  
Plenus sacculus est aranearum.*



Thus he: and thus the monarch of the swains; 35  
Severely chaste Penelope remains,  
But lost to every joy, she wastes the day  
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass  
The javelin, pointed with a star of brass) 40  
They reach'd the dome; the dome with marble shin'd.  
His seat Ulysses to the prince resign'd.  
Not so——exclaims the prince with decent grace,  
For me, this house shall find an humbler place:  
T'usurp the honours due to silver hairs 45  
And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.  
Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,  
And bids the rural throne with osiers rise.

Plautus does the same in his *Aluluria*:

——*anne quis ades auferat?*  
*Nam hic apud nos nihil est aliud quæsti furibus,*  
*Ila inaniis sunt oppleta, atque araneis.*

I am doubtful if it be not too mean an image for English poetry.

v. 43. *Not so——exclaims the prince——*] Nothing can more strongly represent the respect which antiquity paid to strangers, than this conduct of Telemachus: Ulysses is in rags, in the disguise of a beggar, and yet a prince refuses to take his seat. I doubt not but every good man will be pleased with such instances of benevolence and humanity to his fellow-creatures; one well natured action is preferable to a thousand great ones; and Telemachus appears with more advantage upon this heap of hides and osiers, than a tyrant upon his throne.

There sat the prince : the feast Eumæus spread ;  
 And heap'd the shining canisters with bread. 50  
 Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,  
 The frugal remnants of the former day.  
 Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,  
 Around whose verge a mimic ivy twines.  
 And now, the rage of thirst and hunger fled, 55  
 Thus young Ulysses to Eumæus said.

Whence, father, from what shore this stranger, say ?  
 What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way ?  
 To human step our land impervious lies,  
 And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise. 60

The swain returns. A tale of sorrows hear ;  
 In spacious Crete he drew his natal air :

v. 52. *The frugal remnants of the former day.*] This entertainment is neither to be ascribed to parsimony nor poverty, but to the custom and hospitality of former ages. It was a common expression among the Greeks at table, 'Leave something for the Medes;' intimating that something ought to be left for a guest that might come accidentally. Plutarch in his 7th book of the *Symposiasts*, Quest. 3. commends this conduct. Eumæus, says that author, a wise scholar of a wise master, is no way discomposed, when Telemachus pays him a visit ; he immediately sets before him

*The frugal fragments of the former day.*

Besides, the table was accounted sacred to the gods, and nothing that was sacred was permitted to be empty ; this was another reason why the ancients always reserved part of their provisions, not solely out of hospitality to men, but piety to the gods.

Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,  
 For heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.  
 Half-breathless 'scaping to the land, he flew  
 From Thesprot mariners, a murd'rous crew.  
 To thee my son the suppliant I resign,  
 I gave him my protection, grant him thing.  
 Hard task, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,  
 Willing to aid, unable to defend.

v. 70. *Willing to aid*——] It has been observed that Homer intended to give us the picture of a complete hero in his two poems, drawn from the characters of Achilles and Ulysses: Achilles has consummate valour, but wants the wisdom of Ulysses: Ulysses has courage, but courage inclining to caution and stratagem, as much as that of Achilles to rashness. Virgil endeavoured to form a complete hero in Æneas, by joining in his person the forward courage of Achilles with the wisdom of Ulysses, and by this conduct gives us a perfect character. The same observation holds good with respect to the subordinate characters introduced into the two poems of the Iliad and Odyssey; and makes an essential difference between them. Thus the Iliad exhibiting an example of heroic valour, almost all the characters are violent and heroic, Diomed, Ajax, Hector, etc. are all chiefly remarkable for courage: but the Odyssey being intended to represent the patience and wisdom of an hero, almost all the characters are distinguished by benevolence and humanity. Telemachus and Eumæus, Alcinous, Nestor and Menelaus, are every where represented in the mild light of wisdom and hospitality. This makes a continued difference of style in the poetry of the two poems, and the characters of the agents in the Odyssey necessarily exhibit lectures of piety and morality: The reader should keep this in his view. In reading Homer, the Odyssey is to be looked upon as a sequel of the Iliad, and then he will find in the two

Can strangers safely in the court reside,  
 Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride?  
 Ev'n I unsafe: The queen in doubt to wed,  
 Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed?  
 Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame,  
 Deaf to the mighty Ulyssæan name.  
 However, stranger! from our grace receive  
 Such honours as besit a prince to give;  
 sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,  
 And safe to sail with ornaments of love. 80  
 Till then, thy guest amid the rural train  
 Far from the court, from danger far, detain.

poems the perfection of human nature, consummate courage joined with consummate piety. He must be an unobserving reader, who has not taken notice of that *vein of humanity* that runs through the whole *Odyssey*; and a bad man, that has not been pleased with it. In my opinion, Eumæus tending his herds is more amiable than Achilles in all his destructive glory. There is scarce a speech made in the *Odyssey* by Eumæus, Telemachus or Ulysses, but what tends to the improvement of mankind: It was this that endeared the *Odyssey* to the ancients, and Homer's sentences of morality were in every mouth, and introduced in all conversation for the better conduct of human life. This verse was thus applied by some of the ancients; a person being asked what was the duty of an orator, or pleader, answered from Homer,

"Αἶδε' ἀπαμύνομαι ὅτε τις πρῶτις χαλκήνη.

In short, I will not deny but that the *Iliad* is by far the nobler poem, with respect to the poetry; it is fit to be read by kings and heroes; but the *Odyssey* is of use to all mankind, as it teaches us to be good men rather than great, and to prefer morality to glory.

'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,  
 And clothe the naked from th' inclement sky.  
 Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs, 85  
 And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.  
 For should'st thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve  
 I must behold it, and can only grieve.  
 The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,  
 O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain. 90

To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,  
 With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.  
 Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue  
 At once to pity and resent thy wrong.  
 My heart weeps blood, to see a soul so brave 95  
 Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.  
 But tell me, dost thou, prince, dost thou behold  
 And hear their midnight revels uncontroll'd?

v. 92. *With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.*] There is not a more spirited speech in all the Odyssey, than this of Ulysses: his resentment arises from the last words of Telemachus, observes Eustathius:

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,  
 O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

He is preparing his son for the destruction of the suitors, and animating him against despair, by reason of their numbers. This he brings about, by representing that a brave man in a good cause prefers death to dishonour. By the same method Homer exalts the character of Ulysses: Telemachus thinks it impossible to resist the suitors, Ulysses not only resists them, but almost without assistance works their destruction. There is a fine contrast between the tried courage of Ulysses, and the inexperience of Telemachus.



Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,  
Or priests in fabled oracles advise? 100  
Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,  
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour?  
O that I were from great Ulysses sprung,  
Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were strung;  
Or heav'ns! might he return! (and soon appear 105  
He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair)

v. 105.

——(and soon appear

*He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair.*]

Some antient critics, as Eustathius informs us, rejected this verse, and thus read the passage:

Ἦ καὶς ἐξ Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος ἢ καὶ αὐτός;  
'Αὐτίκ' ἔπειτ' ἀπ' ἐμεῖο κάρη ταμοὶ ἀλλότριος φῶς.

Then the sense will be, 'Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself, etc.'

For, add they, if this verse be admitted, it breaks the transport of Ulysses resentment, and cools the warmth of the expression; Eustathius confesses that he was once of the same opinion, but afterwards seems dubious; for, continues he, Ulysses by saying, 'Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself,' gave room to suspect that he was himself Ulysses; and therefore to efface this impression, he adds with great address,

——(and soon appear

He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair)

And by this method removes all jealousy that might arise from his former expression. Dacier misrepresents Eustathius; she says, *Il avoit donne lieu a quelque subcon qu'il ne fust veritablement Ulysse*; whereas he directly says *μὴ ὑποπτεύσῃ ὅτι Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔστι ὁ λαλῶν*, that is, 'he uses this expression, that it may not be suspected that he is Ulysses who speaks:' in reality he inserts these

Might he return, I yield my life a prey  
 To my worst foe, if that avenging day  
 Be not their last: but should I lose my life  
 Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife, 110  
 I chuse the nobler part, and yield my breath  
 Rather than bear dishonour worse than death;  
 Than see the hand of violence invade  
 The rev'rend stranger, and the spotless maid;  
 Than see the wealth of kings consumed in waste, 115  
 The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast.

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eye;  
 Sincere the youthful hero made reply.

Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,

Nor priests in fabled oracles advise; 120

Nor are my brothers who should aid my pow'r

Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour.

Ah me! I boast no brother; heav'n's dread king

Gives from our stock an only branch to spring:

Alone Laertes reign'd Arceſius' heir, 125

Alone Ulyſſes drew the vital air,

And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,

And unblest offspring of a fire unblest!

words solely to avoid discovery, not judging it yet rea-

sonable to reveal himself to Telemachus, much less to

Eumæus.

v. 108. *To my worst foe.*] The words in Greek are

αλλότριος φῶς, or, 'May I fall by the hand of a stranger;'

that is, by the worst of enemies, foreigners being usually

the most barbarous enemies; this circumstance therefore

aggravates the calamity. Eustathius.

v. 127. *And I alone the bed connubial grac'd.*] Ho-

Each neighb'ring realm conducive to our woe

Sends forth her peers, and every peer a foe :

130

The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,

And lofty Zacynth crown'd with shady hills.

Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade

Th' imperial scepter, and the regal bed :

The queen averse to love, yet aw'd by pow'r,

135

Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour :

Mean time their licence uncontroll'd I bear ;

Ev'n now they envy me the vital air :

But heav'n will sure revenge, and gods there are.

But go, Eumæus ! to the queen impart

140

Our safe return, and ease a mother's heart.

mer mentions but one son of Ulysses ; other authors name another, Archsilas ; and Sophocles, Eurylaüs slain by Telemachus ; but perhaps these descended not from Penelope, but concubines. Eustathius.

v. 140. *But go, Eumæus ! to the queen impart.*]

There is nothing more wonderful in Homer, than the distribution of his incidents ; and how fully must he be possessed of his whole subject, and take it in all at one view, to bring about the several parts of it naturally ? Minerva in the beginning of the fifteenth book commanded Telemachus to dispatch Eumæus to Penelope, to inform her of his return. Here this command is executed : but is this all the use the poet makes of that errand ? It is evident it is not : this command furnishes him with a natural occasion for the removal of Eumæus while Ulysses discovers himself to Telemachus. But why might not the discovery have been made before Eumæus ? It was suitable to the cautious character of Ulysses not to trust the knowledge of his person to too many people : besides, if he had here revealed himself to Eumæus, there would not

Yet secret go; for numerous are my foes,

130

And here at least I may in peace repose.

To whom the swain, I hear, and I obey:

But old Laertes weeps his life away, 145

And deems thee lost: shall I my speed employ

To bless his age, a messenger of joy?

135

The mournful hour that tore his son away

Sent the sad fire in solitude to stray;

Yet busied with his slaves, to ease his woe, 150

He dress'd the vine, and bade the garden blow,

Nor food nor wine refus'd; but since the day

140

That you to Pylos plow'd the wat'ry way,

Nor wine nor food he tastes; but sunk in woes,

Wild springs the vine, no more the garden blows. 155

Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost,

Penfive and pale he wanders half a ghost.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)

Yet cease to go——what man so blest but mourns?

have been room for the discovery which is made in the future parts of the *Odyssey*, and consequently the reader had been robbed of the pleasure of it: and it must be allowed, that the several concealments and discoveries of *Ulysses* through the *Odyssey* add no small pleasure and beauty to it.

v. 159. *Yet cease to go——what man so blest but mourns?*] Eustathius reads the words differently, either *αχαῦμεναι πῆρ*, or *αχαῦμενοι πῆρ*. If we use the former reading, it will be understood according to the recited translation; if the latter, it must then be referred to *Telemachus*, and imply, 'Let us cease to inform *Laertes*, though we grieve for him.' I suppose some critics were



Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,  
 This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes.  
 But to the queen with speed dispatchful bear  
 Our safe return, and back with speed repair:  
 And let some handmaid of her train resort  
 To good Laertes in his rural court.

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay  
 He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away:  
 Then from the heav'ns the martial goddess flies  
 Thro' the wide fields of air, and cleaves the skies;

shocked at the words in the former sense, and thought it  
 cruel in Telemachus not to relieve the sorrows of Laertes,  
 which were occasioned chiefly through fondness to his  
 person: Dacier is fully of this opinion: Eustathius pre-  
 fers neither of the lectures: I doubt not but Homer wrote  
 ἀντίμαχον παῖρα; this agrees with the whole context,

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)  
 Yet cease to go—what man so blest but mourns?  
 Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,  
 This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes.

And as for the cruelty of Telemachus, in forbidding Eu-  
 maus to go to Laertes, there is no room for this objecti-  
 on: he guards against it, by requesting Penelope to give  
 him immediate information; which might be done almost  
 as soon by a messenger from her, as by Eumæus. Be-  
 sides, such a messenger to Laertes would be entirely fo-  
 reign to the poem; for his knowledge of the return of  
 Telemachus could contribute nothing to the design of the  
 Odyssey; whereas the information given to Penelope has  
 this effect; it puts the suitors upon new measures, and in-  
 structs her how to regulate her own conduct with regard  
 to them; and therefore the poet judiciously dwells upon  
 this, and passes over the other.



In form, a virgin in soft beauty's bloom,  
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom,

v. 170. *In form a virgin*——] Some of the ancient philosophers thought the poets guilty of impiety, in representing the gods assuming human appearances; Plato in particular (lib. 2. de Repub.) speaks with great severity. 'If a god, says that author, changes his own shape, must he assume a more or less perfect form? undoubtedly a shape less perfect; for a deity, as a deity, can want no perfection; therefore all change must be for the worse: now it is absurd to imagine that a deity can be willing to assume imperfection, for this would be a degradation unworthy of a divine power, and consequently it is absurd to imagine that a deity can be willing to change the form of a deity; it therefore follows, that the gods enjoying a perfection of nature, must eternally and unchangeably appear in it'. Let no poet therefore (meaning Homer) persuade you that the gods assume the form of strangers, and are visible in such appearances. It must be confessed, that if Plato had thus spoken only to refute the absurd opinions of antiquity, which imagined the gods to assume unworthy shapes of bulls, dragons, swans, etc. only to perform some rape, or action unbecoming a deity, reason would have been on his side: but the argument proves too much; supposes that a deity must lose his perfections by any appearance, but of a deity; which is an error: If a god acts suitably to the character of a god, where is the degradation? Aristotle was of this judgment, in opposition to his master Plato; and thought it no diminution to a god to appear in the shape of man, the glory of the creation; in reality, it is a great honour to Homer, that his opinions agree with the verity of the scriptures, rather than the conjectures of philosophers; nay, it is not impossible but these relations might be borrowed from the sacred history: it being manifest that Homer had been in

Alone to Ithacus she stood display'd,

But unapparent as a viewless shade

Escap'd Telemachus: (the pow'rs above,

Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move)

The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread

Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.

The goddess beck'ning waves her deathless hands;

Dauntless the king before the goddess stands.

Egypt, the native country of Moses, in whose writings there are frequent instances of this nature.

v. 176. *The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread  
Of pow'r divine———*

This may seem a circumstance unworthy of poetry, and ridiculous to ascribe a greater sagacity to the brute creation, than to man; but it may be answered, that it was the design of the goddess to be invisible only to Telemachus, and consequently she was visible to the dogs. But

I am willing to believe that there is a deeper meaning and a beautiful moral couched under this story: and perhaps Homer speaks thus, to give us to understand, that the brute creation itself confesses the divinity. Dacier.

v. 178. *The goddess beck'ning waves her deathless hands.*

The goddess evidently acts thus, that Telemachus might not hear her speak to Ulysses; for this would have made the discovery, and precluded that beautiful interview between Ulysses and Telemachus that immediately follows. It is for the same reason that she conceals herself from Telemachus; for the discovery must have been fully and convincingly made by the appearance and veracity of a deity; and then there could have been no room for all those doubts and fears of Telemachus, that enliven and beautify the manner of the discovery. The whole relation is indeed an allegory; the wisdom of U

Book XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 157

Then why (she said) O favour'd of the skies ! 180

Why to thy god-like son this long disguise ?

Stand forth reveal'd : with him thy cares employ

Against thy foes ; be valiant, and destroy !

Lo I descend in that avenging hour,

To combat by thy side, thy guardian pow'r. 185

She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold ;

Imperial robes his manly limbs infold ;

At once with grace divine his frame improves ;

At once with majesty enlarg'd he moves :

Youth flush'd his red'ning cheek, and from his brows 190

A length of hair in sable ringlets flows ;

His black'ning chin receives a deeper shade :

Then from his eyes upsprung the warrior-maid.

The hero re-ascends : The prince o'er-aw'd

Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a god. 195

Ulysses (in poetry, Minerva) suggests to him, that this is a proper time to reveal himself to Telemachus ; the same wisdom (or Minerva) instructs him to dress himself like a king, that he may find the readier credit with his son : in this dress he appears a new man, young and beautiful, which gives occasion to Telemachus to imagine him a deity ; especially because he was an infant when his father sailed to Troy, and therefore though he now appears like Ulysses, Telemachus does not know him to be his father. This is the naked story, when stript of its poetical ornaments.

v. 194.

—The prince o'er-aw'd

Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a god.]

must offer a remark in opposition to that of Dacier upon this place : ' This fear of Telemachus (says that au-

VOL. III.

O

Then with surprize (surprize chafis'd by fears)

How art thou chang'd ! (he cry'd) a god appears !

'thor) proceeds from the opinion of the ancients when the gods came down visibly ; they thought themselves so unworthy of such a manifestation, that whenever it happened, they believed they should die, or meet with some great calamity.' Thus the Israelites address Moses ; " Speak thou to us, and we will hear, but let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die." Thus also Gideon ; " Alas ! O Lord, my God, because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face ; and the Lord said to him, " fear not, thou shalt not die." Hence it is very evident, that this notion prevailed amongst the Israelites : But how does it appear that the Greeks held the same opinion ? The contrary is manifest almost to a demonstration : the gods are introduced almost in every book both of the Iliad and Odyssey ; and yet there is not the least foundation for such an assertion : nay, Telemachus himself in the second book returns thanks to Minerva for appearing to him, and prays for a second vision.

O goddess ! who descending from the skies,  
Vouchsaf'd thy presence to my longing eyes ;  
Hear from thy heav'ns above, O warrior maid,  
Descend once more propitious to my aid !

It is not to be imagined that Telemachus would have preferred this prayer, if the presence of the deity denoted death, or some great calamity ; and all the heroes throughout the Iliad esteem such intercourses as their glory, and converse with the gods without any apprehensions. But whence then proceeds this fear of Telemachus ? entirely from a reverential awe and his own modesty while he stands in the presence of a deity ; for such he believes Ulysses. The words of Telemachus agree with his behaviour : he

Far other vests thy limbs majestic grace,  
Far other glories lighten from thy face !  
If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care 200

Lo ! I the ready sacrifice prepare :

Lo ! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy shrine,  
To win thy grace : O save us, pow'r divine !

Few are my days, Ulysses made reply,  
Nor I, alas ! descendent of the sky. 205

I am thy father. O my son ! my son !

That father, for whose sake thy days have run  
One scene of woe ; to endless cares consign'd,  
And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.

Then rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy 210

With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.

Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew :

He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.

Ah me ! (exclaims the prince with fond desire)

Thou art not——no, thou can'st not be my fire. 215

Heav'n such illusion only can impose,

By the false joy to aggravate my woes.

Who but a god can change the general doom,

And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom ?

Late worn with years in weeds obscene you trod, 220

Now cloath'd in majesty, you move a god !

speaks the language of a man in surprize : it is this surprize at the sudden change of Ulysses, that first makes him imagine him a deity, and upon that imagination offer him sacrifice and prayer ; the whole behaviour paints the nature of man under surprize, and which transports the speaker into vehemence and emotion.



Forbear, he cry'd; for heav'n reserve that name,  
 Give to thy father but a father's claim :  
 Other Ulysses shalt thou never see,  
 I am Ulysses, I (my son) am he. 229  
 Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,  
 'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.  
 Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame surrounds  
 With grace divine ; her pow'r admits no bounds :  
 She o'er my limbs old-age and wrinkles shed ; 130  
 Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.  
 The gods with ease frail men depress, or raise,  
 Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and sate. The prince with transport flew,  
 Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew ; 235  
 Nor less the father pour'd a social flood ;  
 They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.  
 As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,  
 Or parent vultur, mourns her ravish'd young;

v. 238. *As the bold eagle——*] This is a beautiful comparison ; but to take its full force, it is necessary to observe the nature of this φῆνη or *vultur* : Homer does not compare Ulysses to that bird merely for its dignity, it being of the aquiline kind, and therefore the king of birds; but from the knowledge of the nature of it, which doubles the beauty of the allusion : This bird is remarkable for the love it bears towards its young : ‘ Tearing open her own thigh, she feeds her young with her own blood.’ Thus also another author;

Τὸν μηρόν ἐκτίμοντες, ἡματωμένοις  
 Γάλακτος ὀλκοῖς ζωπύρουσι τὰ βρέφη.

They cry, they scream, their unfledg'd brood a prey 240  
To some rude churl, and born by stealth away ;

*Femore exsecto, sanguineo lactis defluxu, suos sætus re-  
socillant.* And the Ægyptians made the vultur their hieroglyphic, to represent a compassionate nature. This gives a reason why this bird is introduced with peculiar propriety to represent the fondness of Ulysses for Telemachus. But where is the point of the similitude? Ulysses embraces his son, but the vultur is said to mourn the loss of her young Eustathius answers, that the sorrow alone, and vehemence of it, is intended to be illustrated by the comparison ; I think he should have added the affection Ulysses bears to Telemachus.

It is observable, that Homer inserts very few similitudes in his *Odyssey*, though they occur frequently almost in every book of the *Iliad*. The *Odyssey* is wrote with more simplicity, and consequently there is less room for allusions. If we observe the similes themselves inserted in each poem, we shall find the same difference : In the *Iliad* they are drawn from lions, storms, torrents, conflagrations, thunder, etc. In the *Odyssey*, from lower objects, from an heap of thorns, from a shipwright plying the wimble, an armourer tempering iron, a matron weeping over her dying husband, etc. The similes are likewise generally longer in the *Iliad* than the *Odyssey*, and less resemblance between the thing illustrated, and the illustration ; the reason is, in the *Iliad* the similitudes are introduced to illustrate some great and noble object, and therefore the poet proceeds till he has raised some noble image to inflame the mind of the reader ; whereas in these calmer scenes the poet keeps closer to the point of allusion, and needs only to represent the object, to render it entertaining : by the former conduct he raises our admiration above the subject, by adding foreign embellishments ; in the latter he brings the copy as close as possible to the original, to possess us with a true and equal image of it.

It has been objected by a French critic, that Homer is

So they aloud : and tears in tides had run,  
Their grief unfinish'd with the setting sun :

blameable for too great a length in his similitudes : that in the heat of an action he stops short, and turns to some allusion, which calls off our attention from the main subject. It is true, comparisons ought not to be too long, and are not to be placed in the heat of an action, as Mr. Dryden observes, but when it begins to decline : Thus in the first *Aeneis*, when the storm is in its fury, the poet introduces no comparison, because nothing can be more impetuous than the storm itself ; but when the heat of the description abates, then lest we should cool too soon, he renews it by some proper similitude, which still keeps up our attention, and fixes the whole upon our minds. The similitude before us is thus placed at the conclusion of the hero's lamentation, and the poet by this method leaves the whole deeply fixed upon the memory. Virgil has imitated this comparison in his fourth *Georgic*, but very judiciously substituted the nightingale in the place of the vulture, that bird being introduced to represent the mournful music of Orpheus.

*Qualis populea mærens Philomela sub umbra  
Amiffis queritur sætus quos durus arator  
Observans nido implumes detraxit : at illa  
Flet noctem, etc.*

Nothing can be sweeter than this comparison of Virgil ; but the learned Huetius thinks he has found a notorious blunder in it : This nightingale (says he) in the first line sits in the shade of a poplar, and yet in the fourth she mourns by night, *flet noctem*. It is evident that monsieur Huet mistakes the word *umbra* for the shade of the tree, which it casts while the sun shines upon it ; whereas it only means that the bird sings *sub foliis*, or concealed in the leaves of it, which may be done by night as well as by day : but if it be thought that this is not a suffici-

But checking the full torrent in its flow,  
The prince thus interrupts the solemn woe. 245

What ship transported thee, O father say,  
And what blest hands have oar'd thee on the way?

All, all (Ulysses instant made reply)  
I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!  
Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd, 250  
A nation ever to the stranger kind;

ent answer, the passage may be thus understood: The nightingale mourning under the shade of a poplar, etc. ceases not all night, or *flet noctem*; that is, she begins her song in the evening by day, but mourns all night. Either of these answers are sufficient for Virgil's vindication.

v. 245. *The prince thus interrupts the solemn woe.*] It does not appear at first view why the poet makes Telemachus recover himself from his transport of sorrow sooner than Ulysses: Is Telemachus a greater master of his passions? or is it to convince Ulysses of his son's wisdom, as Eustathius conjectures! this can scarce be supposed, Ulysses being superior in wisdom. I would chuse rather to ascribe it to human nature; for it has been observed, that affection seldom so strongly ascends, as it descends; the child seldom loves the father so tenderly, as the father the child: this observation has been made from the remotest antiquity. And it is wisely designed by the great author of our natures; for in the common courses of life, the child must bury the parent; it is therefore a merciful dispensation, that the tie of blood and affection should be loosened by degrees, and not torn violently asunder in the full strength of it. It is expected that aged persons should die, their loss therefore grows more familiar to us, and it loses much of its horror through the long expectation of it.

v. 250. *Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd.*] Here

Wrapt in th' embrace of sleep, the faithful train

O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign :

Embroider'd vestures, gold, and brags are laid.

Conceal'd in caverns in the sylvan shade.

255

Hither, intent the rival rout to slay

And plan the scene of death, I bend my way :

So Pallas wills—but thou, my son, explain

The names, and numbers of th' audacious train ;

'Tis mine to judge, if better to employ

260

Assistant force, or singly to destroy.

O'er earth (returns the prince) resounds thy name,

Thy well-try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame ;

Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost ;

Can we engage, not decads, but an host ?

265

Can we alone in furious battle stand,

Against that num'rous, and determin'd band ?

Hear then their numbers : from Dulichium came

Twice twenty six, all peers of mighty name ;

Is a repetition of what the reader knows entirely, from many parts of the preceding story ; but it being necessary in this place, the poet judiciously reduces it into the compass of six lines, and by this method avoids prolixity. Eustathius.

v. 268. *Hear then their numbers—*] According to this catalogue, the suitors with their attendants (the two sewers, and Medon, and Phemius) are a hundred and eighteen ; but the two last are not to be taken for the enemies of Ulysses ; and therefore are not involved in their punishment in the conclusion of the *Odyssey*. Eustathius.

Spondanus mistakes this passage egregiously.



Six are their menial train : twice twelve the boast 270

Of Samos : twenty from Zacynthus coast :

And twelve our country's pride ; to these belong

Medon and Phemius skill'd in heav'nly song.

Two few'rs from day to day the revels wait.

Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state. 275

With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,

Were by false courage unreveng'd to die,

Then what assistant pow'rs you boast, relate,

Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate.

Mark well my voice, Ulysses strait replies : 280

What need of aids, if favour'd by the skies ?

If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,

By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove.

Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)

Against the banded pow'rs of all mankind : 285

They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,

Wither the strength of man, and awe the Gods.

Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might

We rise terrific to the task of fight.

Μέδων κῆρυξ καὶ θεὸς ἄοιδός.

He understands it thus, ' Medon who was an herald and  
' a divine bard.' *Præco unus qui et idem Musicus* ; It  
is true, the construction will bear this interpretation ; but  
it is evident from the latter part of the 22d Odyssey, that  
the Κῆρυξ and the Ἀοιδός were two persons, namely, Me-  
don and Phemius : Medon acts all along as a friend to Pe-  
nelope and Telemachus, and Phemius is affirmed to be de-  
tained by the suitors involuntarily and consequently they  
are both guiltless.

v. 288. *Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might  
We rise terrific to the task of fight.*]

But thou, when morn salutes th' aerial plain,

290

The court revisit and the lawless train :

This whole discourse between Ulysses and Telemachus is introduced to prepare the reader for the catastrophe of the poem: Homer judiciously interests heaven in the cause, that the reader may not be surprized at the event, when he sees such numbers fall by the hands of those heroes: he consults probability, and as the poem now draws to a conclusion, sets the assistance of heaven full before the reader.

It is likewise very artful to let us into some knowledge of the event of the poem; all care must be taken that it be rather guessed than known. If it be entirely known, the reader finds nothing new to awaken his attention; if on the contrary it be so intricate, that the event cannot possibly be guessed at, we wander in the dark, and are lost in uncertainty. The art of the poet consists not in concealing the event entirely; but when it is in some measure foreseen, in introducing such a number of incidents that now bring us almost into the sight of it, then by new obstacles perplex the story to the very conclusion of the poem; every obstacle, and every removal of it fills us with surprise, with pleasure or pain alternately, and consequently calls up our whole attention. This is admirably described by Vida, lib. 2.

——— *Eventus nonnullis sæpe canendo*

*Indiciis porro ostendunt in luce maligna*

*Sublustrique aliquid dant cernere noctis in umbra.*

Th' event should glimmer with a dubious ray,

Not hid in clouds, nor glare in open day.)

This rule he afterwards illustrates by a very happy similitude.

*Haud aliter longinqua petit qui forte viator*

*Mœnia, si positas altis in collibus arces*

Me thither in disguise Eumæus leads,  
 An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.  
 There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age,  
 Bear it, my son! repress thy rising rage :

295

*Nunc etiam dubiat oculis videt, incipit ultro  
 Lætior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,  
 Quam cum nusquam ullæ cernuntur quas adit arces;  
 Obscurum sed iter tendit convallibus inis.*

The conduct both of Virgil and Homer are agreeable to this observation; for instance, Anchises and Tiresias, in the shades, foretel Æneas and Ulysses, that all their troubles shall end prosperously; that the one shall found the Roman empire, the other regain his kingdoms; but the means being kept concealed, our appetite is rather whetted than cloyed, to know by what means these events are brought about: Thus, as in Vida's allusion, they shew us the city at a great distance, but how we are to arrive at it, by what roads they intend to guide us to it, this they keep concealed; the journey discovers itself, and every step we advance leads us forward, and shews where we are to take the next: neither does the poet directly lead us in the strait path, sometimes we are as it were in a labyrinth, and we know not how to extricate ourselves out of it; sometimes he carries us into by-ways, and we almost lose sight of the direct way, and then suddenly they open into the chief road, and convey us to the journey's end. In this consists the skill of the poet; he must form probable intricacies, and then solve them probably; he must set his heroe in dangers, and then bring him out of them with honour. This observation is necessary to be applied to all those passages in the Odyssey, where the event of it is obscurely foretold, and which some tasteless critics have blamed, as taking away the curiosity of the reader by an unseasonable discovery.

If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,  
 Bear it, my son ! howe'er they heart rebel.  
 Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain  
 Their lawless insults, tho' thou strive in vain :  
 For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call, 300  
 And vengeance strikes whom heav'n has doom'd to fall.  
 Once more attend : when † she, whose pow'r inspires  
 The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires ;  
 I give the sign : that instant, from beneath,  
 Aloft convey the instruments of death, 305

† Minerva.

v. 296. *If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,  
 Bear it, my son ! howe'er thy heart rebel.*]

Plutarch, in his treatise upon reading poems, observes the wisdom of Ulysses in these instructions : he is the person who is more immediately injured, yet he not only restrains his own resentment, but that of Telemachus : he perceives that his son is in danger of flying out into some passion, he therefore very wisely arms him against it. Men do not put bridles upon horses when they are already running with full speed, but they bridle them before they bring them out to the race : this very well illustrates the conduct of Ulysses ; he fears the youth of Telemachus may be too warm, and through an unseasonable ardour at the sight of his wrongs, betray him to his enemies ; he therefore persuades him to patience and calmness, and pre-disposes his mind with rational considerations to enable him to encounter his passions, and govern his resentment.

v. 304. ——— *That instant from beneath,*

*Aloft convey the instruments of death.*]

These ten lines occur in the beginning of the nineteenth book, and the ancients (as Eustathius informs us) were of opinion, that they are here placed improperly ; for how, say they, should Ulysses know that the arms were in a

Armour and arms; and if mistrust arise,  
Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise.

"These glittering weapons, ere he sail'd to Troy  
"Ulysses view'd with stern heroic joy;  
"Then, beaming o'er th'illumin'd wall they shone: 310  
"Now dust dishonours all their lustre gone.  
"I bear them hence (so Jove my soul inspires)  
"From the pollution of the fuming fires;  
"Lest when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood  
"Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with blood; 315  
"Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite  
"The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight."

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive:  
For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.  
Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield, 320  
A pointed javelin, and a fenceful shield.

lower apartment, when he was in the country, and had not yet seen his palace? But this is no real objection; his repository of arms he knew was in the lower apartment, and therefore it was rational to conclude that they were in it. The verses are proper in both places; here Ulysses prepares Telemachus against the time of the execution of his designs; in the nineteenth book that time is come, and therefore he repeats his instructions.

v. 316. *Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite*

*The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.]*

This seems to have been a proverbial expression, at least it has been so used by latter writers: the observation holds true to this day; and it is manifest that more men fall by the sword in countries where the inhabitants daily wear swords, than in those where a sword is thought no part of dress or ornament. Dacier.



But by my blood that in thy bosom glows,  
 By that regard a son his father owes;  
 The secret, that thy father lives, retain  
 Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train; 325  
 Hide it from all; ev'n from Eumæus hide,  
 From my dear father, and my dearer bride.  
 One care remains, to note the loyal few  
 Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew;  
 And noting, ere we rise in vengeance prove 330  
 Who loves his prince; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth: To emulate I aim  
 The brave and wife, and my great father's fame.  
 But re-consider, since the wisest err,  
 Vengeance resolv'd 'tis dang'rous to defer. 335

v. 324. *The secret, that thy father lives, retain  
 Lock'd in thy bosom——*]

This injunction of secrecy is introduced by Ulysses with the utmost solemnity; and it is very necessary that it should be so; the whole hopes of his re-establishment depending upon it: besides this behaviour agrees with the character of Ulysses, which is remarkable for disguise and concealment. The poet makes a further use of it; namely, to give him an opportunity to describe at large the several discoveries made to Penelope, Laertes, and Eumæus personally by Ulysses, in the sequel of the *Odyssey*, which are no small ornaments to it; yet must have been omitted, or have lost their effect, if the return of Ulysses had been made known by Telemachus; this would have been like discovering the plot before the beginning of the play. At the same time this direction is an excellent rule to be observed in management of all weighty affairs, the success of which chiefly depends upon secrecy.

v. 334. *But re-consider——*]

The poet here de-

What length of time must we consume in vain,

Too curious to explore the menial train?

While the proud foes, industrious to destroy

Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.

Suffice it in this exigence alone

340

To mark the damsels that attend the throne:

Dispers'd the youth resides; their faith to prove

Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from Jove.

scribes Telemachus rectifying the judgment of Ulysses; Is this any disparagement to that hero? It is not, but an exact representation of human nature; for the wisest men may receive, in particular cases, instructions from men less wise; and the eye of the understanding in a young man, may sometimes see further than that of age; that is, in the language of the poet, a wise and mature Ulysses may sometimes be instructed by a young and unexperienced Telemachus.

v. 343. *If thou hast spoke from Jove.*] The expression in the Greek is obscure, and it may be asked, to what refers Διὸς τίσις; Dacier renders it, *S'il vray que vous ayez vu un prodige*; or "if it be true that you have seen a prodigy:" Now there is no mention of any prodigy seen by Ulysses in all this interview; and this occasions the obscurity: but it is implied, for Ulysses directly promises the assistance of Jupiter; and how could he depend upon it, but by some prodigy from Jupiter? Eustathius thus understands the words; Τίσις, ἐξ ἑορμῶν τοις ἔφης ἀπεινίσσας τὸν Διὸς ἡμῖν ἕσθαι. And then the meaning will be, "If the prodigy from Jupiter be evident, there is no occasion to concern ourselves about the household train." But then does not that expression imply doubt, and a jealousy, that Ulysses might possibly depend too much upon supernatural assistance? It only insinuates, that he ought to be certain in the interpretation of the

While in debate they waste their hours away,  
 Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay ; 345  
 With speed they guide the vessel to the shores ;  
 With speed debarking land the naval stores ;  
 Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,  
 And trust the presents to his friendly care.  
 Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart 350  
 Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart ;  
 Left a sad prey to ever-musing cares,  
 Pale grief destroy what time a while forbears.

Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,  
 And cries aloud, Thy son, oh queen, returns : 355

prodigy ; but Telemachus refers himself entirely to Ulysses, and acquiesces in his judgment.

v. 345. *Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay.*]

It is manifest that this vessel had spent the evening of the preceding day, the whole night and part of the next morning, in sailing from the place where Telemachus embarked : for it is necessary to remember that Telemachus to avoid the suitors had been obliged to fetch a large compass, and land upon the northern coast of Ithaca ; and consequently the vessel was necessitated to double the whole isle on the western side to reach the Ithacan bay. This is the reason that it arrives not till the day afterwards, and that the herald dispatched by the associates of Telemachus, and Eumæus from the country, meet upon the road, as they go to carry the news of the return of Telemachus to Penelope. It is likewise evident that the lodge of Eumæus was not far distant from the place ; for he sets out towards the city after eating in the morning, and passing some time in conference with Telemachus, delivers his message, and returns in the evening of the same day.

v. 355. *And cries aloud, Thy son, oh queen, returns.*]

Eumæus sage approach'd th' imperial throne,  
 And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,  
 Then measur'd back the way——The suitor band  
 Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand;  
 And issuing from the dome, before the gate, 360  
 With clouded looks, a pale assembly fate.

At length Eurymachus. Our hopes are vain;  
 Telemachus in triumph sails the main.  
 Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display;  
 Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news convey! 365

Scarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand  
 Amphinomus survey'd th' associate band;  
 Full to the bay within the winding shores  
 With gather'd sails they stood, and lifted oars.

This little circumstance distinguishes characters, and gives variety to poetry: it is a kind of painting, which always varies its figures by some particular ornament, or attitude, so as no two figures are alike: the contrary conduct would make an equal confusion both in poetry and painting, and an indistinction of persons and characters. I will not promise, that these particularities are of equal beauty, as necessity, especially in modern languages; the Greek is always flowing, sonorous and harmonious; the language, like leaves, oftentimes conceals barrenness, and a want of fruit, and renders the sense at least beautiful, if not profitable; this is wanted in some degree in English poetry, where it is not always in our power to conceal the nakedness with ornaments: this particularity before us is of absolute necessity, and could not well be avoided; the indiscretion of the herald in speaking aloud, discovers the return of Telemachus to the suitors, and is the incident that brings about the following debates, and furnishes out the entertainment of the succeeding part of this book.

O friends ! he cry'd, elate with rising joy, 370

See to the port secure the vessel fly !

Some god has told them, or themselves survey

The bark escap'd ; and measure back their way.

Swift at the word descending to the shores,

They moor the vessel and unlade the stores ; 375

Then moving from the strand, apart they fate,

And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.

Lives then the boy ? he lives (Antinous cries)

The care of gods and fav'rite of the skies.

All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels 380

Aurora flam'd above the eastern hills,

And from the lofty brow of rocks by day

Took in the ocean with a broad survey :

Yet safe he sails ! the pow'rs celestial give

To shun the hidden snares of death, and live. 385

But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed

Be now the scene of instant death decreed :

Hope ye success ? undaunted crush the foe.

Is he not wise ? know this, and strike the blow.

Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws 390

The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause ?

v. 391. *The Greeks averse too justly to our cause.*]

This verse is inserted with great judgment, and gives an air of probability to the whole relation ; for if it be asked why the suitors defer to seize the supreme power, and to murder Telemachus, they being so superior in number, Antinous himself answers, that they fear the people, who favour the cause of Telemachus, and would revenge his injuries : it is for this reason that they formed the ambush by sea ; and for this reason Antinous proposes to



Strike, ere the states conven'd the foe betray,  
Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.

intercept him in his return from the country: they dare not offer open violence, and therefore make use of treachery. This speech of Antinous forms a short under plot to the poem; it gives us pain (says Eustathius) for Telemachus, and holds us in suspense till the intricacy is unravelled by Amphinomus.

The whole harrangue is admirable in Homer: the diction is excellently suited to the temper of Antinous, who speaks with precipitation: his mind is in agitation and disorder, and consequently his language is abrupt, and not allowing himself time to explain his thoughts at full length, he falls into ellipses and abbreviations. For instance, he is to speak against Telemachus, but his contempt and resentment will not permit him to mention his name, he therefore calls him *τον ἄνδρα*; thus in *μήτι κακὸν ριζῶσι, δίδοικα* is understood; thus likewise in this verse.

Ἀλλ' αἴγετε πρὶν κείνοισι μεθυμένῳσσι ἀχαιῶς.

Ἔεις αγορήν——

the word *ὀλοθρεύσωμεν*, or *ἀνέλωμεν*, must be understood, to make the sense intelligible. Thus also after *εἰ δ' ὅμως ἔστι μῦθος, ἀφανδάνει*, to make *Ἀλλὰ* in the next sentence begin it significantly, we must supply *καὶ ἡ δοκῆ καλὸν ὁ φόνος*; then the sense is compleated; *If this opinion displease, and his death appear not honourable*, but you would have him live, etc. otherwise *ἀλλὰ βέλειθι* must be construed like *βέλειθι δὲ*; and lastly, to image the disorder of Antinous more strongly, Homer inserts a false quantity, by making the first syllable in *βέλειθι* short. Antinous attends not, through the violence of his spirit, to the words he utters, and therefore falls into this error, which excellently represents it. It is impossible to retain these ellipses in the translation, but I have endeavoured to shew the warmth of the speaker, by putting the words into

Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly  
Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown sky? 395

The brave prevent misfortune; then be brave,  
And bury future danger in his grave,  
Returns he? ambush'd we'll his walk invade,  
Or where he hides in solitude and shade:

And give the palace to the queen a dow'r, 400  
Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.

But if submissive you resign the sway,  
Slaves to a boy, go, flatter and obey.

Retire we instant to our native reign,  
Nor be the wealth of kings consum'd in vain. 405

Then wed whom choice approves: the queen be giv'n  
To some blest prince, the prince decreed by heav'n.

Abash'd, the suitor train his voice attends;  
'Till from his throne Amphinomus ascends,  
Who o'er Dulichium stretch'd his spacious reign, 410

A land of plenty, blest with every grain:  
Chief of the numbers who the queen address  
And though displeasing, yet displeasing least.

interrogations, which are always uttered with vehemence,  
and signs of hurry and precipitation.

v. 413. *And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing least.*  
We are not to gather from this expression, that Penelope  
had any particular tenderness for Amphinomus, but it  
means only that he was a person of some justice and mo-  
deration. At first view, there seems no reason why the  
poet should distinguish Amphinomus from the rest of the  
suitors, by giving him this humane character; but in rea-  
lity there is an absolute necessity for it. Telemachus is  
doomed to die by Antinous: here is an intricacy formed,

Soft were his words ; his actions wisdom sway'd ;  
Graceful a-while he paus'd, then mildly said. 415

O friends forbear ! and be the thought withstood :  
'Tis horrible to shed imperial blood !  
Consult we first th' all-seeing pow'rs above,  
And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.

and how is that hero to be preserved with probability ?  
The poet ascribes a greater degree of tenderness and moderation to one of the suitors, and by this method preserves Telemachus. Thus we see the least circumstance in Homer has its use and effect ; the art of a good painter is visible in the smallest sketch, as well as in the largest draught.

v. 419. *And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.*] Strabo, lib. 7. quotes this verse of Homer, and tells us that some critics thus read it,

"Εἰ μὲν κ' αἰτήσωσι Διὸς μεγάλας τομῆρας.

preferring *τομῆραι* to *θίμισαι* : for, add they, *θίμισαι* nowhere in Homer signifies oracles, but constantly laws or councils. Tmarus or Tomarus was an mountain on which the oracle of Jupiter stood, and in process of time it was used to denote the oracles themselves. *Τόμυρος* is formed like the word *οἰκῆρος*, the former signifies *custos Tmari*, the latter *custos domus* : in this sense Amphinomus advises to consult the Dodonean oracles, which were given from the mountain Tmarus : but, adds Strabo, Homer is to be understood more plainly ; and by *θίμισαι*, the councils, the will and decisions of the oracles are implied, for those decisions were held as laws ; thus *βελή* as well as *θίμισαι*, signifies the Dodonean oracles.

Ἐκ δρυὸς ὑψίκομος Διὸς βελὴν ἐπαύσαι.

Neither is it true (observes the scholiast upon Strabo) that

If these assent, ev'n by this hand he dies ; 420

If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

He said : The rival train his voice approv'd,  
And rising instant to the palace mov'd.

Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they sate  
Recumbent on the shining thrones of state. 423

Then Medon, conscious of their dire debates,  
The murd'rous council to the queen relates.

*Δίμναι* never signifies oracles in Homer : for in the hymn to Apollo (and Thucydides quotes that hymn as Homer's) the poet thus uses it,

————— ἀγγελῶσι Δίμναις  
Φοίβη' Ἀπόλλωνος —————

Strabo himself uses *Διμισίαν* in this sense in lib. 17. and in the oracles that are yet extant, *Δίμισιν* frequently signifies *oracula reddere* ; and in Ælian (continues the scholiast) lib. 3. chap. 43, 44. *ἔσσι Διμισιύω*, signifies *non tibi oracula reddum* ; and Hesychius render *Δίμναι*, by *μαντεῖα*, *χρήσμοι*, prophecy or oracles.

v. 426. — *Medon, conscious of their dire debates.*] After this verse Eustathius recites one that is omitted in most of the late editions as spurious, at least improper.

Ἄυλῆς ἐκτὸς ἔων, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθεν μῆτιν ὕφαινον.

That is, Medon was out of the court, whereas the suitors formed their council within it : the line is really to be suspected ; for a little above, Homer directly tells us, that the suitors left the palace.

*Then issuing from the dome, before the gate  
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sate.*

It is likewise very evident that they stood in the open air,

Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends ;

Her hasty steps a damsel train attends.

Full where the dome its shining valves expands, 430

Sudden before the rival pow'rs she stands :

And veiling decent with a modest shade

Her cheek, indignant to Antinous said.

O void of faith ! of all bad men the worst !

Renown'd for wisdom, by th' abuse accurst ! 435

for they discover the ship returning from the ambush, and sailing into the bay. How then can it be said of the suitors, that they formed their assembly in the court *οἱ δ' ἔνδοθι μῆτιν ὑφαινον*. Besides, continues Dacier, they left the palace, and placed themselves under the lofty wall of it.

*Ἐκ δ' ἦλθον μεγάροιο, παρὲκ μέγα τείχιον ἀυλῆς.*

How then is it possible to see the ship entering the port, when this wall must necessarily obstruct the sight ? The two verses therefore evidently contradict themselves, and one of them must consequently be rejected : she would have the line read thus ;

*Αυλῆς ἐνθὺς ἰων, οἱ δ' ἔκτοθι, etc.*

But all the difficulty vanishes by taking *Ἀυλῆ*, as it is frequently used, to denote any place open to the air, and consequently not the court, but the court-yard, and this is the proper signification of the word. Then Medon may stand on the outside of the wall of the court-yard, *Ἀυλῆς ἐκτὸς*, and over-hear the debates of the suitors who form their council within it, or *ἐνδοθι μῆτιν ὑφαινον*. And as for the wall intercepting the view of the suitors, this is merely conjecture ; and it is more rational to imagine that the court-yard was open seaward, that so beautiful a prospect as the ocean might not be shut up from the palace of a king, or at least the palace might stand upon such an eminence as to command the ocean.



Mistaking fame proclaims thy generous mind !

Thy deeds denote thee of the basest kind.

Wretch ! to destroy a prince that friendship gives,

While in his guest his murd'rer he receives :

Nor dread superior Jove, to whom belong

440

The cause of suppliants, and revenge of wrong.

Hast thou forgot (ingrateful as thou art)

Who sav'd thy father with a friendly part ?

Lawless he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs

The Taphian pyrates on Thesprotia's shores ;

445

Enrag'd, his life, his treasures they demand ;

Ulysses sav'd him from th' avenger's hand.

And would thou evil for his good repay ?

His bed dishonour, and his house betray ?

Afflict his queen ? and with a murd'rous hand

450

Destroy his heir ? ———but cease, 'tis I command.

v. 447. ———*from th' avenger's hand.*] This whole passage is thus understood by Eustathius ; By *ἀνέον ὑπὸ δέσπῳ*, Homer means the Ithacans ; and he likewise affirms that the people who demanded vengeance of Ulysses were also the Ithacans. It is not here translated in this sense, the construction rather requires it to be understood of the Thesprotians, who were allies of Ulysses, and by virtue of that alliance demanded Eupithes, the father of Antinous, out of the hands of Ulysses. But I submit to the reader's judgment.

v. 449. *His bed dishonour, and his house betray ?*

*Afflict his queen ? etc.]*

It is observable that Penelope in the compass of two lines recites four heads of her complaint ; such contractions of thought and expression being natural to persons in anger, as Eustathius observes ; she speaks with heat, and consequently starts from thought to thought with precipitation.

Far hence those fears (Eurymachus reply'd)  
O prudent princeſs, bid thy ſoul confide.  
Breathes there a man who dares that hero ſlay,  
While I behold the golden light of day? 455

The whole ſpeech is animated with a generous reſentment, and ſhe concludes at once like a mother and a queen; like a mother, with affection for Telemachus; and like a queen with authority *πανταδαι κίλομαι*.

v. 452. ————*Eurymachus reply'd.*] This whole diſcourſe of Eurymachus is to be underſtood by the way of contrariety: there is an obvious and a latent interpretation; for inſtance, when he ſays,

*His blood in vengeance ſmokes upon my ſpear;*

it obviously means the blood of the perſon who offers violence to Telemachus; but it may likewise mean the blood of Telemachus, and the conſtruction admits both interpretations: Thus alſo when he ſays, that no perſon ſhall lay hands upon Telemachus, while he is alive, he means that he will do it himſelf: and laſtly, when he adds,

*Then fear no mortal arm; if heav'n deſtroy,  
We muſt reſign; for man is born to die,*

the apparent ſignification is, that Telemachus has occaſion only to fear a natural death; but he means if the oracle of Jupiter commands them to deſtroy Telemachus, that then the ſuitors will take away his life. He alludes to the foregoing ſpeech of Amphinomus:

*Consult we firſt th' all-ſeeing pow'rs above,  
And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.  
If they aſſent, ev'n by this hand he dies;  
If they forbid, I war not with the ſkies.* Euſtathius.

No: by the righteous pow'rs of heav'n I swear,  
His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.

Ulysses, when my infant days I led,

With wine suffic'd me, and with dainties fed :

My gen'rous soul abhors th' ungrateful part,

460

And my friend's son lives dearest to my heart.

Then fear no mortal arm : If heav'n destroy,

We must resign ; for man is born to die.

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir'd :

Then forrowing, with sad step the queen retir'd,

465

With streaming eyes all comfortless deplor'd,

Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her lord ;

Nor ceas'd, till Pallas bid her sorrows fly,

And in soft slumber seal'd her flowing eye.

And now Eumæus, at the ev'ning hour,

470

Came late returning to his sylvan bow'r.

Ulysses and his son had drest with art

A yearling boar, and gave the gods their part.

Holy repast! That instant from the skies

The martial goddess to Ulysses flies :

475

She waves her golden wand, and reassumes !

From ev'ry feature every grace that blooms ;

At once his vestures change ; at once she sheds

Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads.

Lest to the queen the swain with transport fly,

480

Unable to contain th' unruly joy.

When near he drew ; the prince breaks forth ; proclaim

What tydings, friend ? what speaks the voice of fame ?

Say, if the suitors measure back the main,

Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain ?

485

Whether, he cries, they measure back the flood,  
Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,  
Escap'd my care: where lawless suitors sway,  
Thy mandate born, my soul distain'd to stay.  
But from th' Hermæan height I cast a view, 490  
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew;

v. 490. *From th' Hermæan height*——] It would be superfluous to translate all the various interpretations of this passage; it will be sufficiently intelligible to the reader, if he looks upon it only to imply that there was an hill in Ithaca called the Hermæan hill, either because there was a temple, statue, or altar of Mercury upon it; and so called from that deity.

It has been written that Mercury being the messenger of the Gods, in his frequent journies cleared the roads, and when he found any stones, he threw them in an heap out of the way, and these heaps were called *ἑρμαῖαι*, or *Mercuries*. The circumstance of his clearing the roads is somewhat odd, but why might not Mercury as well as Trivia preside over them, and have his images erected in public ways, because he was supposed to frequent them as the messenger of the gods?

This book takes up no more time than the space of the thirty eighth day; for Telemachus reaches the lodge of Eumæus in the morning, a little after he dispatches Eumæus to Penelope, who returns in the evening of the same day. The book in general is very beautiful in the original; the discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus is particularly tender and affecting: It has some resemblance with that of Joseph's discovery of himself to his brethren, and it may not perhaps be disagreeable to see how two such authors describe the same passion. *I am Joseph, I am your brother Joseph.*

*I am Ulysses, I, my son! am he!*

Her freight a shining band ; with martial air  
 Each pois'd his shield, and each advanc'd his spear;  
 And if aright these searching eyes survey,  
 Th' eluded suitors stem the wat'ry way. 495

The prince, well pleas'd to disappoint their wiles,  
 Steals on his fire a glance, and secret smiles.  
 And now a short repast prepar'd, they fed,  
 'Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled :  
 Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay, 500  
 And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.

*And he wept aloud, and he fell on his brother's neck  
 and wept.*

*He wept abundant, and he wept aloud.*

But it must be owned that Homer falls infinitely short of Moses : he must be a very wicked man, that can read the history of Joseph without the utmost touches of compassion and transport. There is a majestic simplicity in the whole relation, and such an affecting portrait of human nature, that it overwhelms us with vicissitudes of joy and sorrow. This is a pregnant instance how much the best of heathen writers is inferior to the divine historian upon a parallel subject, where the two authors endeavour to move the softer passions. The same may with equal truth be said in respect to sublimity : not only in the instance produced by Longinus, viz. *Let there be light, and there was light : Let the earth be made, and the earth was made :* but in general, in the more elevated parts of scripture, and particularly the whole book of Job ; which, with regard both to sublimity of thought, and morality, exceeds beyond all comparison the most noble parts of Homer.



THE  
ODYSSEY.  
BOOK XVII

THE ARGUMENT.

*Telemachus, returning to the city, relates to Penelope the sum of his travels. Ulysses is conducted by Eumæus to the palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his master, after an absence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumæus returns into the country, and Ulysses remains among the suitors, whose behaviour is described.*

SOON as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,  
Sprinkled with roseate light the dewy lawn;  
In haste the prince arose, prepar'd to part;  
His hand impatient grasps the pointed dart;  
Fair on his feet the polish'd sandals shine,  
And thus he greets the master of the swine.  
My friend adieu; let this short stay suffice;  
I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes,  
And end her tears, her sorrows, and her sighs.

v. 8. *I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes.*] There are two reasons for the return of Telemachus; one, the duty a son owes to a mother: the other, to find an opportunity to put in execution the designs concerted with Ulysses: the poet therefore shifts the scene from the lodge

But thou attentive, what we order heed ;

10

This hapless stranger to the city lead ;

By public bounty let him there be fed,

And bless the hand that stretches forth the bread.

To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,

My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.

15

to the palace. Telemachus takes not Ulysses along with him, for fear he should raise suspicion in the suitors, that a person in a beggar's garb has some secret merit, to obtain the familiarity of a king's son, and this might be an occasion of a discovery ; whereas when Ulysses afterwards appears amongst the suitors, he is thought to be an entire stranger to Telemachus, which prevents all jealousy, and gives them an opportunity to carry on their measures without any particular observation. Besides, Eumæus is still to be kept in ignorance concerning the person of Ulysses. Telemachus therefore gives him a plausible reason for his return ; namely, that his mother may no longer be in pain for his safety : this likewise excellently contributes to deceive Eumæus. Now as the presence of Ulysses in the palace is absolutely necessary to bring about the suitors destruction, Telemachus orders Eumæus to conduct him thither, and by this method he comes as the friend and guest of Eumæus, not of Telemachus : moreover, this injunction was necessary : Eumæus was a person of such generosity, that he would have thought himself obliged to detain his guest under his own care and inspection : nay, before he guides him towards the palace, in the sequel of this book, he tells Ulysses he does it solely in compliance with the order of Telemachus, and acts contrary to his own inclinations.

*v. 14. To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes*

*My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.]*

This might appear too free a declaration, if Telemachus

If this raise anger in the stranger's thought,

The pain of anger punishes the fault:

The very truth I undisguis'd declare:

For what so easy as to be sincere?

To this Ulysses. What the prince requires

20

Of swift removal, seconds my desires.

To want like mine, the peopled town can yield

More hopes of comfort than the lonely field.

Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,

Or stoop to tasks a rural lord demands.

25

Adieu! but since this ragged garb can bear

So ill, th' inclemencies of morning air,

A few hours space permit me here to stay;

My steps Eumæus shall to town convey,

With riper beams when Phœbus warms the day.

30

Thus he: nor ought Telemachus reply'd,

But left the mansion with a lofty stride:

Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breast elate,

Revolving deep the suitors sudden fate.

had made it before he knew Ulysses; for no circumstance could justify him for using any disregard toward the poor and stranger, according to the strict notions, and the sanctity, of the laws of hospitality amongst the ancients: but as the case stands we are not the least shocked at the words of Telemachus; we know the reason why he thus speaks; it is to conceal Ulysses. He is so far from shewing any particular regard to him, that he treats him with a severity in some degree contrary to the laws of hospitality; by adding, that if he complains of this hard usage, the complaint will not redress but increase his calamity.

Arriving now before th' imperial hall,  
 He props his spear against the pillar'd wall;  
 Then like a lion o'er the threshold bounds;  
 The marble pavement with his step resounds:  
 His eye first glanc'd where Euryclea spreads  
 With furry spoils of beasts the splendid beds:  
 She saw, she wept, she ran with eager pace,  
 And reach'd her master with a long embrace.  
 All crouded round the family appears,  
 With wild entrancement, and ecstatic tears.  
 Swift from above descends the royal fair;  
 (Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,  
 Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air)

v. 46. *Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,  
 Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air.*]

This description presents us with a noble idea of the beauty and chastity of Penelope; her person resembles Venus, but Venus with the modest air of Diana. Dionysius Halicarn. takes notice of the beauty and softness of these two verses.

Ἡ δ' ἐν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περιέβην Πηνελόπειαν  
 Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη, ἣ δὲ χερσὶ Ἀφροδίτης.

When Homer (remarks that author) paints a beautiful face, or an engaging object, he chuses the softest vowels, and most smooth and flowing semivowels: he never clogs the pronunciation with rough sounds, and a collision of untunable consonants, but every syllable, every letter conspire to exhibit the beauty of the object he endeavours to represent: there are no less than three and thirty vowels in two lines, and no more than twenty nine consonants, which makes the verses flow away with an agreeable smoothness and harmony.

Hangs o'er her son ; in his embraces dies ;  
 Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes :  
 Few words she spoke, tho' much she had to say, 50  
 And scarce those few, for tears, could force their way.

Light of my eyes ! he comes ! unhop'd for joy !  
 Has heav'n from Pylos brought my lovely boy ?  
 So snatch'd from all our cares !—Tell, hast thou known  
 Thy father's fate, and tell me all thy own. 55

Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind !  
 Cease with those tears to melt a manly mind,  
 (Reply'd the prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,  
 From death and treason to thy arms restor'd.  
 Go bathe, and rob'd in white, ascend the tow'rs ; 60  
 With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal pow'rs ;  
 To ev'ry god vow hecatombs to bleed,  
 And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed.

Penelope, we see, embraces her son with the utmost affection : *Kissing the lip* was not in fashion in the days of Homer ; *No one* (remarks the bishop) *ever kisses the lip or mouth*. Penelope here kisses her son's eyes, and his head ; that is, his cheek, or perhaps forehead : and Eumæus, in the preceding book, embraces the hands, eyes, and head of Telemachus. But for the comfort of the ladies, I rejoice to observe that all these were ceremonious kisses from a mother to a son, or from an inferior to a superior : this therefore is no argument that lovers thus embraced, nor ought it to be brought as a reason why the present manner of salutation should be abrogated. Madam Dacier has been so tender as to keep it a secret from the men, that there ever was a time in which the modern method of kissing was not in fashion ; she highly deserves their thanks and gratitude for it.



While to th' assembled council I repair ;  
 A stranger sent by heav'n attends me there ;  
 My new accepted guest I haste to find,  
 Now to Piræus' honour'd charge consign'd.

The matron heard, nor was his word in vain.  
 She bath'd ; and rob'd in white, with all her train,  
 To ev'ry god vow'd hecatombs to bleed,  
 And call'd Jove's vengeance on the guilty deed.  
 Arm'd with his lance the prince then past the gate ;  
 Two dogs behind, a faithful guard, await :  
 Pallas his form with grace divine improves :  
 The gazing croud admires him as he moves.

v. 65. *A stranger sent by heav'n attends me there.*  
 There is a vein of sincere piety that runs through the words and actions of Telemachus : he has no sooner delivered his mother from her uneasy apprehensions concerning his safety, but he proceeds to another act of virtue toward Theoclymenus, whom he had taken into his protection : he performs his duty towards men and towards the gods. It is by his direction that Penelope offers up her devotions for success, and thanks for his return. It is he who prescribes the manner of it ; namely, by washing the hands, in token of the purity of mind required by those who supplicate the deities ; and by putting on clean garments, to shew the reverence and regard with which their souls ought to be possess'd when they appear before the gods. I am not sensible that the last ceremony is often mentioned in other parts of Homer ; yet I doubt not but it was practis'd upon all religious solemnities. The moral of the whole is, that piety is a sure way to victory : Telemachus appears every where a good man, and for this reason he becomes at last an happy one ; and his calamities contribute to his glory.

Him, gath'ring round, the haughty suitors greet  
 With semblance fair, but inward' deep deceit.

Their false addresses gen'rous he deny'd,  
 Past on, and fate by faithful Mentor's side;  
 With Antiphus, and Halitherses sage, 80

(His father's counsellors, rever'd for age.)

Of his own fortunes, and Ulysses' fame,  
 Much ask'd the seniors; till Piræus came.

The stranger-guest pursu'd him close behind;  
 Whom when Telemachus beheld he join'd. 85

He, (when Piræus ask'd for slaves to bring

The gifts and treasures of the Spartan king)

Thus thoughtful answer'd: Those shall not move,

Dark and unconscious of the will of Jove:

We know not yet the full event of all: 90

Stabb'd in his palace if your prince must fall,

Us, and our house if treason must o'erthrow,

Better a friend possess them, than a foe:

If death to these, and vengeance heav'n decree,

Riches are welcome then, not else, to me. 95

'Till then, retain the gifts.——The hero said,

And in his hand the willing stranger led.

Then dis-array'd, the shining bath they sought,

With unguents smooth, of polish'd marble wrought;

Obedient handmaids with assistant toil 100

Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil:

Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,

And fresh from bathing, to their seats withdrew.

The golden ew'r a nymph attendant brings,

Replenish'd from the pure, translucent springs; 105

With copious streams that golden ew'r supplies

A silver laver of capacious size.

They wash : the table, in fair order spread,

Is pil'd with viands and the strength of bread.

Full opposite, before the folding gate,

110

The pensive mother sits in humble state ;

Lowly she sate, and with dejected view

The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.

The prince and stranger shar'd the genial feast,

'Till now the rage of thirst and hunger ceast.

115

When thus the queen. My son ! my only friend !

Say, to my mournful couch shall I ascend ?

(The couch deserted now a length of years ;

The couch for ~~ew'r~~ water'd with my tears)

v. 117. *Say, to my mournful couch, etc.*] Penelope had requested Telemachus to give her an account of his voyage to Pyle, and of what he had heard concerning Ulysses. He there waved the discourse, because the queen was in public with her female attendants : by this conduct the poet sustains both their characters ; Penelope is impatient to hear of Ulysses, and this agrees with the affection of a tender wife ; but the discovery being unseasonable, Telemachus forbears to satisfy her curiosity ; in which he acts like a wise man. Here, observes Eustathius, she gently reproaches him for not satisfying her impatience concerning her husband ; she insinuates that it is a piece of cruelty to permit her still to grieve, when it is in his power to give her comfort ; and this induces him to gratify her desires. It ought to be observed, that Homer chuses a proper time for this relation ; it was necessary that the suitors should be ignorant of the story of Ulysses ; Telemachus therefore makes it when they are withdrawn to their sports, and when none were present but friends.

Say wilt thou not (ere yet the suitor crew  
Return, and riot shakes our walls a-new)

Say wilt thou not the least account afford?  
The least glad tydings of my absent lord?

To her the youth. We reach'd the Pylian plains,  
Where Nestor, shepherd of his people, reigns.

All arts of tenderness to him are known,  
Kind to Ulysses' race as to his own;

No father, with a fonder grasp of joy,  
Strains to his bosom his long absent boy.

But all unknown, if yet Ulysses breathe,  
Or glide a spectre in the realms beneath.

For farther search, his rapid steeds transport  
My lengthen'd journey to the Spartan court.

There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms  
(So heav'n decreed) engag'd the great in arms.

My cause of coming told, he thus rejoin'd;  
And still his words live perfect in my mind.

Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train  
An absent hero's nuptial joys prophane!

v. 134. *There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms  
(So heav'n decreed) etc.]*

Eustathius takes notice of the candid behaviour of Telemachus with respect to Helen: She had received him courteously, and he testifies his gratitude, by ascribing the calamities she drew upon her country to the decree of heaven, not to her immodesty: this is particularly decent in the mouth of Telemachus, because he is now acquainted with his father's return; otherwise he could not have mentioned her name but to her dishonour, who had been the occasion of his death.

So with her young, amid the woodland shades, 140  
 A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,  
 Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,  
 And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;  
 Meantime returning, with remorseless sway  
 The monarch savage rends the panting prey: 145  
 With equal fury, and with equal fame,  
 Shall great Ulysses re-assert his claim.  
 O Jove! supreme! whom men and gods revere;  
 And thou whose lustre gilds the rowling sphere!  
 With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid 150  
 The chief adopted by the martial maid!  
 Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,  
 As when, contending on the Lesbian shore,  
 His prowess Philomelides confest,  
 And loud acclaiming Greeks the victor blest: 155  
 Then soon th' invaders of his bed, and throne,  
 The inlove presumptuous shall by death atone.  
 Now what you question of my antient friend,  
 With truth I answer; thou the truth attend.

v. 138. *Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train, etc.]* These verses are repeated from the fourth *Odyssey*; and are not without a good effect; they cannot fail of comforting Penelope, by assuring her that Ulysses is alive, and restrained by Calypso involuntarily; they give her hopes of his return, and the satisfaction of hearing his glory from the mouth of Menelaus. The conciseness of Telemachus is likewise remarkable; he recapitulates in thirty eight lines the subject of almost three books, the third, the fourth and fifth; he selects every circumstance that can please Penelope, and drops those that would give her pain.



Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 195

Learn what I heard the \* sea-born seer relate, 160  
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.  
Sole in an isle, imprison'd by the main,  
The sad survivor of his num'rous train,  
Ulysses lies ; detain'd by magic charms,  
And prest unwilling in Calypso's arms. 165  
No sailors there, no vessels to convey,  
Nor oars to cut th'immeasurable way——  
This told Atrides, and he told no more.  
Thence safe I voyag'd to my native shore.

He ceas'd ; nor made the pensive queen reply, 170  
But droop'd her head, and drew a secret sigh.  
When Theoclymenus the seer began :  
Oh suff'ring consort of the suff'ring man !

\* Proteus.

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v. 172. *When Theoclymenus the seer began, etc.*] It is with great judgment that the poet here introduces Theoclymenus ; he is a person that has no direct relation to the story of the Odyssey, yet because he appears accidentally in it, Homer unites him very artificially with it, that he may not appear to no purpose, and as an useless ornament. He here speaks as an Augur, and what he utters contributes to the perseverance of Penelope in resisting the addresses of the suitors, by assuring her of the return of Ulysses ; and consequently in some degree Theoclymenus promotes the principal action. But it may be said, if it was necessary that Penelope should be informed of his return, why does not Telemachus assure her of it, who was fully acquainted of the truth ? The answer is, that Penelope is not to be fully informed, but only encouraged by a general hope : Theoclymenus speaks from his art, which may possibly be liable to error ; but Telemachus must

What human knowledge could, those kings might tell;  
But I the secrets of high heav'n reveal. 173

Before the first of gods be this declar'd,  
Before the board whose blessings we have shar'd;  
Witness the genial rites, and witness all  
This house holds sacred in her ample wall!

Ev'n now this instant, great Ulysses lay'd 180

At rest, or wand'ring in his country's shade,  
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view  
Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.

Of this sure auguries the gods bestow'd,  
When first our vessel anchor'd in your road. 185

Succeed those omens, heav'n! (the queen rejoind)

So shall our bounties speak a grateful mind;  
And ev'ry envy'd happiness attend

The man, who calls Penelope his friend.

Thus commun'd they: while in the marble court 190

(Scene of their insolence) the lords resort;

have spoken from knowledge, which would have been contrary to the injunctions of Ulysses, and might have proved fatal by an unseasonable discovery: it was therefore judicious in the poet to put the assurance of the return of Ulysses into the mouth of Theoclymenus, and not of Telemachus.

There is an expression in this speech, which in the Greek is remarkable; literally it is to be rendered, 'Ulysses is now sitting or creeping in Ithaca,' *ἡμενος ἢ ἑκπαι*; that is, Ulysses is returned and concealed: it is taken from the posture of a person in the act of endeavouring to hide himself: he sits down or creeps upon the ground. Eustathius explains it by *κρύβειν, καὶ ἔκπαι* ὁρῶν *ἄνδρα.*

Athwart the spacious square each tries his art  
To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.

Now did the hour of sweet repast arrive,  
And from the field the victim flocks they drive: 195  
Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them best,  
And honour'd with a portion of their feast)

v. 192. ———each tries his art

*To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.]*

Eustathius remarks, that though the suitors were abandoned to luxury, vice and intemperance, yet they exercise themselves in laudable sports; they tols the quoit, or throw the javelin, which are both heroic diversions, and form the body into strength and activity. This is owing to the virtue of the age, not the persons: such sports were fashionable, and therefore used by the suitors, and not because they were heroic. However they may instruct us never to give ourselves up to idleness and inaction; but to make our very diversions subservient to nobler views, and turn a pleasure into a virtue.

v. 196. *Medon the herald, one who pleas'd them best.]*

We may observe that the character of Medon is very particular; he is at the same time a favourite of the suitors, and Telemachus, persons entirely opposite in their interests. It seldom happens that any man can please two parties, without acting an insincere part: Atticus was indeed equally acceptable to the two factions of Cæsar and Pompey, but it was because he seemed neutral, and acted as if they were both his friends; or rather he was a man of such eminent virtues, that they esteemed it an honour to have him thought their friend. Homer every where represents Medon as a person of integrity; he is artful, but not criminal: no doubt but he made all compliances, that consisted with probity, with the suitors dispositions; by this method he saved Penelope more effectually than if he had shewed a more rigid virtue. He made himself

To bid the banquet interrupts their play.  
 Swift to the hall they haste; aside they lay  
 Their garments, and succinct, the victims slay. 200  
 Then sheep and goats and bristly porkers bled,  
 And the proud steer was o'er the marble spread.

While thus the copious banquet they provide;  
 Along the road conversing side by side,  
 Proceed Ulysses and the faithful swain: 205  
 When thus Eumæus, gen'rous and humane.

To town, observant of our lord's behest,  
 Now let us speed; my friend, no more my guest!  
 Yet like myself I wish'd thee here preferr'd,  
 Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd. 210  
 But much to raise my master's wrath I fear;  
 The wrath of princes ever is severe.

Then heed his will, and be our journey made  
 While the broad beams of Phœbus are display'd,  
 Or ere brown ev'ning spreads her chilly shade. 215

master of their hearts by an insinuating behaviour, and was a spy upon their actions. Eustathius compares him to a buskin that fits both legs, *ὅτι τὴν κόλον*; he seems to have been an Anti-Cato, and practised a virtuous gaiety.

v. 210. *Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.*  
 Such little traits as these are very delightful; for the reader knowing that the person to whom this offer is made, is Ulysses, cannot fail of being diverted to see the honest and loyal Eumæus promising to make his master and king the keeper of his herds or stalls, *ταρμῶν*; and this is offered as a piece of good fortune or dignity.

v. 215. — *Ere ev'ning spreads her chilly shade.*

Just thy advice, (the prudent chief rejoin'd)  
 And such as suits the dictate of my mind.  
 Lead on: but help me to some staff to stay  
 My feeble step, since rugged is the way.

Across his shoulders, then, the scrip he flung, 220  
 Wide patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong:  
 A staff Eumæus gave. Along the way  
 Chearly they fare: behind, the keepers stay;  
 These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)  
 Sustain his absence, and attend the herd. 225

Eustathius gathers from these words, that the time of the action of the *Odyssey* was in the end of autumn, or beginning of winter, when the mornings and evenings are cold: thus Ulysses, in the beginning of this book makes the coldness of the morning an excuse for not going with Telemachus; his rags being but an ill defence against it: and here Eumæus mentions the coldness of the evening, as a reason why they should begin their journey in the heat of the day; so that it was now probably about ten of the clock, and they arrive at Ithaca at noon: from hence we may conjecture, that the lodge of Eumæus was five or six miles from the city; that is, about two hours walk.

v. 224. *These with their watchful dogs.*——] It is certain that if these little particulars had been omitted, there would have been no chasm in the connection; why then does Homer insert such circumstances unnecessarily, which it must be allowed are of no importance, and add nothing to the perfection of the story? nay, they are such as may be thought trivial, and unworthy the dignity of epic poetry. But, as Dacier very well observes, they are a kind of painting: Were a painter to draw this subject, he would undoubtedly insert into the piece these herdsmen and dogs after the manner of Homer; they are natural



And now his city strikes the monarch's eyes,  
 Alas ! how chang'd ! a man of miseries ;  
 Propt on a staff, a beggar old and bare,  
 In rags dishonest flutt'ring with the air !  
 Now pass'd the rugged rock, they journey down 230  
 The cavern'd way descending to the town,  
 Where, from the rock, with liquid lapse distills  
 A limpid fount ; that, spread in parting rills,  
 Its current thence to serve the city brings :  
 An useful work ! adorn'd by antient kings. 235  
 Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor, there  
 In sculptur'd stone immortaliz'd their care,  
 In marble urns receiv'd it from above,  
 And shaded with a green surrounding grove ;

ornaments, and consequently are no disgrace either to the poet or the painter.

It is observable that Homer gives us an exact draught of the country ; he sets before us, as in a picture, the city, the circular grove of poplars adjacent, the fountain falling from a rock, and the altar sacred to the nymphs, erected on the point of it. We are as it were transported into Ithaca, and travel with Ulysses and Eumæus : Homer verifies the observation of Horace above all poets ; namely, that poetry is painting.

v. 236. *Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor*—] Public benefactions demand public honours and acknowledgements ; for this reason Homer makes an honourable mention of these three brothers. Ithaca was a small island, and destitute of plenty of fresh water ; this fountain therefore was a public good to the whole region about it ; and has given immortality to the authors of it. They were the sons of Pterelaus (as Eustathius informs us ; ) Ithacus gave name to the country, Neritus to a mountain, and Polyctor to a place called Polyctorium.

Where silver alders, in high arches twin'd, 240

Drink the cool stream, and tremble to the wind.

Beneath, sequester'd to the nymphs, is seen

A mossy altar, deep embower'd in green ;

Where constant vows by travellers are pay'd,

And holy horrors solemnize the shade. 245

Here with his goats, (not vow'd to sacred flame,

But pamper'd luxury) Melanthius came ;

Two grooms attend him. With an envious look

He ey'd the stranger, and imperious spoke.

The good old proverb how this pair fulfill ! 250

One rogue is usher to another still.

Heav'n with a secret principle indu'd

Mankind, to seek their own similitude.

Where goes the swine-herd with that ill-look'd guest ?

That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feast ! 255

Full many a post have those broad shoulders worn,

From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with scorn ;

To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,

'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.

v. 258. *To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,*

*'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.*]

Dacier is very singular in her interpretation of this passage : She imagines it has a reference to the games practised amongst the suitors, and to the rewards of the victors, which were usually tripods and beautiful captives. ' Think-  
' est thou (says Melanthius) that this beggar will obtain  
' the victory in our sports, and that they will give him, as  
' the reward of his valour, some beautiful slave, or some  
' precious tripod ?' But in Homer there is nothing that gives the least countenance to this explication : he thus li-

To beg, than work, he better understands; 260  
Or we prehaps might take him off thy hands.

terally speaks: "This fellow by going from door to door" will meet with correction, while he begs meanly for a "few scraps, not for things of price, such as a captive or "tripod." Eustathius explains it as spoken in contempt of Ulysses; that he appears to be such a vile person, as to have no ambition or hope to expect any thing better than a few scraps, nor to aspire to the rewards of nobler strangers, such as captives or tripods. "Ἀκοῖαι, says the same author, are the minuteest crumbs of bread, σμικρότατοι ψωμοὶ. I am persuaded, that the reader will subscribe to the judgment of Eustathius, if he considers the construction, and that ἄρας and λίσσας are governed by αἰτίζων as effectually as ἀράς, and therefore must refer to the same act of begging, not of claiming by victory in the games; αἰτίζων is not a word that can here express a reward, but only a charity: besides, would it not be absurd to say that a beggar goes from door to door asking alms, and not rewards bestowed upon victors in public exercises? the words πολλῶσι φιλῶσι make the sense general, they denote the life of a beggar, which is to go from door to door, and consequently they ought not to be confined solely to the suitors, and if not, they can have no reference to any games, or to any rewards bestowed upon such occasions. Besides, it is scarce to be conceived that Melanthius could think this beggar capable of being admitted into the company, much less into the diversions of the suitors, who were all persons of high birth and station. It is true, lib. 21. Ulysses is permitted to try the bow, but this is through the peculiar grace of Telemachus, who knew the beggar to be Ulysses; and entirely contrary to their injunctions.

From this passage we may correct an error in Hesychius: ἄρας, says he, are γυναῖκες καὶ τρίποδες: the sentence is evidently maimed, for Hesychius undoubtedly thus

For any office could the slave be good,  
 To cleanse the fold, or help the kids to food ;  
 If any labour those big joints could learn,  
 Some whey, to wash his bowels, he might earn. 265  
 To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to spread,  
 Is all, by which that graceless maw is fed.  
 Yet hear me ! if thy impudence but dare  
 Approach yon walls, I prophesy thy fare :  
 Dearly, full dearly shalt thou buy thy bread 270  
 With many a footstool thund'ring at thy head.

He thus : nor insolent of word alone,  
 Spurn'd with his rustic heel his king unknown ;  
 Spurn'd, but not mov'd : He, like a pillar stood,  
 Nor stir'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road : 275  
 Doubtful, or with his staff to strike him dead,  
 Or greet the pavement with his worthless head.  
 Short was that doubt ; to quell his rage inur'd.  
 The hero stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.

wrote it, ἄορας γυναῖκας λέγοντας, for thus, adds he, Homer uses it :

———ἐκ ἄορας ἐδὲ λίσσεται.

that is, says Hesychius, ἐ γυναῖκας ἐδὲ τρίποδας, referring to this verse of the Odyssey.

v. 279. *The hero stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.*]  
 Homer excellently sustains the character of Ulysses ; he is a man of patience, and master of all his passions : he is here misused by one of his own servants, yet is so far from returning the injury, that he stifles the sense of it, without speaking one word : It is true he is described as having a conflict in his soul ; but this is no derogation to his character : not to feel like a man, is insensibility, not vir-

But hateful of the wretch, Eumæus heav'd 280  
 His hands obtesting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.  
 Daughters of Jove ! who from th'ætherial bow'rs  
 Descend to swell the springs, and feed the flow'rs !  
 Nymphs of this fountain ! to whose sacred names  
 Our rural victims mount in blazing flames ! 285  
 To whom Ulysses' piety preferr'd  
 The yearly firstlings of his flock, and herd ;  
 Succeed my wish ; your votary restore :  
 Oh be some god his convoy to our shore !  
 Due pains shall punish then this slave's offence, 290  
 And humble all his airs of insolence,  
 Who proudly stalking, leaves the herds at large,  
 Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.

What mutters he ? (Melanthius sharp rejoins )  
 This crafty miscreant big with dark designs ? 295

tue ; but to repress the emotions of the heart, and keep them within the bounds of moderation, this argues wisdom, and turns an injury into a virtue and glory. There is an excellent contrast between the benevolent Eumæus, and the insolent Melanthius. Eumæus resents the outrage of Melanthius more than Ulysses ; he is moved with indignation, but how does he express it ? not by railing, but by an appeal to heaven in a prayer : a conduct worthy to be imitated in more enlightened ages. The word *αὔλαιος* here bears a peculiar signification ; it does not imply voluptuousness as usually, but pride, and means that Ulysses would spoil his haughty airs, if he should ever return : this interpretation agrees with what follows, where Eumæus reproaches him for despising his rural charge, and aspiring to politeness, or as we express it, to be a man of the town.



The day shall come ; nay, 'tis already near,  
 When, slave ! to sell thee at a price too dear,  
 Must be my care ; and hence transport thee o'er,  
 (A load and scandal to this happy shore.)  
 Oh ! that as surely great Apollo's dart, 300  
 Or some brave suitor's sword, might pierce the heart  
 Of the proud son ; as that we stand this hour  
 In lasting safety from the father's pow'r.

So spoke the wretch ; but shunning farther fray,  
 Turn'd his proud step, and left them on their way. 305  
 Strait to the feast-full palace he repair'd,  
 Familiar enter'd, and the banquet shar'd ;  
 Beneath Eurymachus, his patron lord,  
 He took his place, and plenty heap'd the board.

Mean-time they heard, soft circling in the sky, 310  
 Sweet airs ascend, and heav'nly minstrelsy ;  
 (For Phemius to the lyre attun'd the strain :)  
 Ulysses hark'ned, then address'd the swain.

v. 308. *Beneath Eurymachus—He took his place.—*]

We may gather from hence the truth of an observation  
 formerly made, That Melanthius, Eumæus, etc. were  
 persons of distinction, and their offices posts of honour :  
 we see Melanthius, who had charge of the goats of Ulysses,  
 is a companion for princes.

The reason why Melanthius in particular associates  
 himself with Eurymachus is, an intrigue which that prince  
 holds with Melanthe his sister, as appears from the fol-  
 lowing book. There is a confederacy and league between  
 them, and we find they all suffer condign punishment in the  
 end of the Odyssey.

Well may this palace admiration claim,  
 Great, and respondent to the master's fame ! 315  
 Stage above stage th' imperial structure stands,  
 Holds the chief honours and the town commands :  
 High walls and battlements the courts inclose,  
 And the strong gates defy a host of foes.  
 Far other cares its dwellers now employ ; 320  
 The throng'd assembly, and the feast of joy :  
 I see the smokes of sacrifice aspire,  
 And hear (what graces ev'ry feast) the lyre.

Then thus Eumæus. Judge we which were best ;  
 Amidst yon revellers a sudden guest 325  
 Chuse you to mingle, while behind I stay ?  
 Or I first ent'ring introduce the way ?  
 Wait for a space without, but wait not long ;  
 This is the house of violence and wrong :  
 Some rude insult thy rev'rend age may bear ; 330  
 For like their lawless lords, the servants are.

v. 318. *High walls and battlements, etc.*] We have here a very particular draught or plan of the palace of Ulysses ; it is a kind of castle, at once designed for strength and magnificence : this we may gather from *ὑπεροπλισατα* which Hesychius explains by *ὑπερπηδῆσαι, ὑπερεβῆναι*, not easily to be surmounted, or forced by arms.

Homer artfully introduces Ulysses struck with wonder at the beauty of the palace ; this is to confirm Eumæus in the opinion that Ulysses is really the beggar he appears to be, and a perfect stranger among the Ithacans : thus also when he complains of hunger, he speaks the language of a beggar, as Eustathius remarks, to persuade Eumæus that he takes his journey to the court, solely out of want and hunger.

Just is, oh friend! thy caution, and address  
 (Reply'd the chief) to no unheedful breast )  
 The wrongs and injuries of base mankind  
 Fresh to my sense, and always in my mind. 335  
 The bravely-patient to no fortune yields:  
 On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,  
 Storms have I past, and many a stern debate ;  
 And now in humbler scene submit to fate.  
 What cannot Want? the best she will expose, 340  
 And I am learn'd in all her train of woes ;  
 She fills with navies, hosts, and loud alarms  
 The sea, the land, and shakes the world with arms !  
 Thus, near the gates conferring as they drew,  
 Argus, the dog, his antient master knew ; 345

v. 345. *Argus, the dog, his antient master knew, etc.* ]  
 This whole episode has fallen under the ridicule of the critics; monsieur Perault in particular: 'The dunghill before the palace (says that author) is more proper for a peasant than a king; and it is beneath the dignity of poetry to describe the dog Argus almost devoured with vermin.' It must be allowed, that such a familiar episode could not have been properly introduced into the Iliad: it is writ in a nobler style, and distinguished by a boldness of sentiments and diction; whereas the Odyssey descends to the familiar, and is calculated more for common than heroic life. What Homer says of Argus is very natural, and I do not know any thing more beautiful or more affecting in the whole poem: I dare appeal to every person's judgment, if Argus be not as justly and properly represented, as the noblest figure in it. It is certain that the vermin which Homer mentions would debase our poetry, but in the Greek that very word is noble and sonorous, *Kυρραϊσιν*: But how is the objection concerning

He, not unconscious of the voice, and tread,  
 Lifts to the sound his ear, and rears his head,  
 Bred by Ulysses, nourish'd at his board,  
 But ah ! not fated long to please his lord ?  
 To him, his swiftness and his strength were vain ; 350  
 The voice of glory call'd him o'er the main.  
 Till then in ev'ry sylvan chace renown'd,  
 With Argus, Argus, rung the woods around ;  
 With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,  
 Or trac'd the mazy leveret o'er the lawn. 355  
 Now left to man's ingratitude he lay ;  
 Un-hous'd, neglected, in the public way ;  
 And where on heaps the rich manure was spread,  
 Obscene with reptiles, took his fordid bed.

He knew his lord : he knew, and strove to meet, 360  
 In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet ;

the dunghill to be answered ? We must have recourse to the simplicity of manners amongst the ancients, who thought nothing mean, that was of use to life. Ithaca was a barren country, full of rocks and mountains, and owed its fertility chiefly to cultivation, and for this reason such circumstantial cares were necessary. It is true such a description now is more proper for a peasant than a king, but antiently it was no disgrace for a king to perform with his own hands, what is now left only to peasants. We read of a dictator taken from the plough, and why may not a king as well manure his field as plough it, without receding from his dignity ? Virgil has put the same thing into a precept :

*Ne saturare fimo pingui pudeat sola.*

v. 361. *In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet.]*

Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes,  
Salute his master, and confess his joys.  
Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul;  
Adown his cheek a tear unbidden stole, 365  
Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head, and dry'd  
The drop humane; then thus impassion'd cry'd.

What noble beast in this abandon'd state  
Lies here all helpless at Ulysses' gate?  
His bulk and beauty speak no vulgar praise; 370  
If, as he seems, he was in better days,  
Some care his age deserves: or was he priz'd  
For worthless beauty? therefore now despis'd?

It may seem that this circumstance was inserted casually, or at least only to shew the age and infirmity of Argus: but there is a further intent in it: If the dog had ran to Ulysses and fawned upon him, it would have raised a strong suspicion in Eumæus that he was not such a stranger to the Ithacans as he pretended, but some person in disguise; and this might have occasioned an unseasonable discovery. Eustathius.

v. 364. *Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul.* I confess myself touched with the tenderness of these tears in Ulysses; I would willingly think that they proceed from a better principle than the weakness of human nature, and are an instance of a really virtuous and compassionate disposition.

—*ἀγυθοὶ δ' ἀγιδάρευς ἀνδρῆς.*

Good men are easily moved to tears: In my judgment, Ulysses appears more amiable while he weeps over his faithful dog, than when he drives an army of enemies before him: That shews him to be a great hero, This a good man. It was undoubtedly an instance of an excel-



Such dogs, and men there are, mere things of state,  
And always cherish'd by their friends, the great. 375

Not Argus so, (Eumæus thus rejoin'd)  
But serv'd a master of a nobler kind,  
Who never, never shall behold him more !  
Long, long since perish'd on a distant shore !  
Oh had you seen him, vig'rous, bold and young, 380  
Swift as a stag, and as a lion strong ;  
Him no fell savage on the plain withstood,  
None 'scap'd him, bosom'd in the gloomy wood ;  
His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,  
To wind the vapour in the tainted dew ! 385  
Such, when Ulysses left his natal coast ;  
Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is lost !  
The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,  
A sleek and idle race is all their care :

lent disposition in one of the fathers who prayed for the  
grace of tears.

————— *mollissima corda*

*Humano generi dare se natura sâletur*

*Quæ lacrymas dedit, hæc nostri pars optima sensus.*

Juv. Sat. 15.

And Dryden,

*Each gentle mind the soft infection felt,*

*For richest metals are most apt to melt.*

v. 374. *Such dogs and men there are, mere things of  
state,*

*And always cherish'd by their friends, the great.]*

It is in the Greek *ἄναξτες*, or *kings* ; but the word is not  
to be taken in too strict a sense ; it implies *all persons of  
distinction* or *οὐκ ἐξοικισμένοι*, like the word *rex* in Horace.

The master gone, the servants what restrains? 390

Or dwells humanity where riot reigns?

Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day

Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

This said, the honest herdsman strode before:

The musing monarch pauses at the door: 395

The dog whom fate had granted to behold

His lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,

*Regibus hic mos est ubi equos mercantur.*

And *reginæ* in Terence (as Dacier observes) is used in the same manner.

————— *Eunuchum porro dixti velle te:*

*Quia sole utuntur his reginæ.*

v. 392.

————— *Whatever day*

*Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.]*

This is a very remarkable sentence, and commonly found to be true. Longinus, in his enquiry into the decay of human wit, quotes it. "Servitude, be it never so justly established, is a kind of prison, wherein the soul shrinks in some measure, and diminishes by constraint: it has the same effect with the boxes in which dwarfs are inclosed, which not only hinder the body from its growth, but make it less by the constriction. It is observable that all the great orators flourished in republics; and indeed what is there that raises the souls of great men more than liberty? In other governments men commonly become, instead of orators, pompous flatterers: a man born in servitude may be capable of other sciences; but no slave can ever be an orator; for while the mind is depressed and broken by slavery, it will never dare to think or say any thing bold and noble; all the vigour evaporates, and it remains as it were confined in a

Takes a last look, and having seen him, dies ;  
So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes !

And now Telemachus, the first of all, 400  
Observ'd Eumæus ent'ring in the hall ;  
Distant he saw, across the shady dome ;  
Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come.  
There stood an empty seat, where late was plac'd,  
In order due, the steward of the feast, 405  
(Who now was busied carving round the board ;)  
Eumæus took, and plac'd it near his lord.  
Before him instant was the banquet spread,  
And the bright basket pil'd with loaves of bread.

Next came Ulysses, lowly at the door, 410  
A figure despicable, old, and poor,

" prison." *Etiam fera animalia, si clausa teneas, virtutis obliviscuntur. Tacit. Hist. lib. 4.*

These verses are quoted in Plato, lib. 6. de legibus, but somewhat differently from our editions.

"Ἡμεῖν γὰρ τὸ τοῦ ἀπαμειβίτου ἐνέχοντα ζῆναι  
Ἄνδρῶν ἔς ἀνδρῶν, etc.

However this aphorism is to be understood only generally, not universally ; Eumæus who utters it is an instance to the contrary, who retains his virtue in a state of subjection ; and Plato speaks to the same purpose, asserting that some slaves have been found of such virtue as to be preferred to a son or brother ; and have often preserved their masters and their families.

v. 399. *So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes.* It has been a question what occasioned the death of Argus, at the instant he saw Ulysses : Eustathius imputes it to the joy he felt at the sight of his master. But there has

In squalid vests with many a gaping rent,  
 Propt on a staff, and trembling as he went.  
 Then, resting on the threshold of the gate,  
 Against a cypress pillar lean'd his weight ; 415  
 (Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plain)  
 The thoughtful son beheld, and call'd his swain:  
 These viands, and this bread, Eumæus, bear !  
 And let yon mendicant our plenty share :  
 Then let him circle round the suitors' board, 420  
 And try the bounty of each gracious lord.  
 Bold let him ask, encourag'd thus by me ;  
 How ill, alas ! do want and shame agree !

another objection been started against Homer, for ascribing so long a life as twenty years to Argus, and that dogs never surpass the fifteenth year ; but this is an error ; Aristotle affirms, that some dogs live two and twenty, and other naturalists subscribe to his judgment. Eustathius tells us, that other writers agree, that some dogs live twenty four years. Pliny thus writes, *Canes Laconici vivunt annis denis, femina duodenis, cetera genera quindecim annos, aliquando viginti*. Madam Dacier mentions some of her own knowledge that lived twenty-three years ; and the translator, not to fall short of these illustrious examples, has known one that died at twenty-two, big with puppies.

v. 423. *How ill, alas ! do want and shame agree !*  
 We are not to imagine that Homer is here recommending immodesty : but to understand him as speaking of a decent assurance, in opposition to a faulty shame or bashfulness. The verse in the Greek is remarkable.

Ἄιδῶς δ' ἐκ ἀγαθῇ κτεχεμένην ἀνδρὶ προίχῃ.

His lord's command the faithful servant bears ;  
 The seeming beggar answers with his pray'rs. 425  
 Blest be Telemachus ! in ev'ry deed  
 Inspire him, Jove ! in ev'ry wish succeed !  
 This said, the portion from his son convey'd  
 With smiles receiving, on his scrip he lay'd.  
 Long as the minstrel swept the sounding wire, 430  
 He fed, and ceas'd when silence held the lyre.  
 Soon as the suitors from the banquet rose,  
 Minerva prompts the man of mighty woes

A person of great learning has observed that there is a tautology in the three last words ; in *a beggar that wants* : as if the very notion of a beggar did not imply want. Indeed Plato, who cites this verse in his *Charides*, uses another word, instead of *πεοιχῆ*, and inserts *περιβαλ*. Hesiod likewise, who makes use of the same line, instead of *πεοιχῆ* reads *νομιζῆ*, which would almost induce us to believe that they thought there was a tautology in Homer. It has therefore been conjectured, that the word *πεοιχῆς* should be inserted in the place of *πεοιχῆ*. I am sorry that the construction will not allow it ; that word is of the masculine gender, and *ἀγαθὴ* which is of the feminine cannot agree with it. We may indeed substitute *ἀγαθός*, and then the sense will be *bashfulness is no good petitioner for a beggar* ; but this must be done without authority. We must therefore thus understand Homer ; “ Too much “ modesty is not good for a poor man, who lives by begging,” *πεοιχῆ* ; and this solution clears the verse from the tautology, for a man may be in want, and not be a beggar ; or (as Homer expresses it) *νεχεσμένος*, and yet not *πεοιχῆς*.

v. 433. *Minerva prompts, etc.*] This is a circumstance that occurs almost in every book of the *Odyssey*, and Pallas has been thought to mean no more than the



inherent wisdom of Ulysses, which guides all his actions upon all emergencies: it is not impossible but the poet might intend to inculcate, that the wisdom of man is the gift of heaven, and a blessing from the gods. But then is it not a derogation to Ulysses, to think nothing but what the goddess dictates? and a restraint of human liberty, to act solely by the impulse of a deity? Plutarch in his life of Coriolanus excellently solves this difficulty. "Men (observes that author) are ready to censure and despise the poet, as if he destroyed the use of reason and the freedom of their choice, by continually ascribing every suggestion of heart to the influence of a goddess: where- as he introduces a deity not to take away the liberty of the will, but as moving it to act with freedom; the deity does not work in us the inclinations, but only offers the object to our minds, from whence we conceive the impulse, and form our resolutions." However these influences do not make the action involuntary, but only give a beginning to spontaneous operations; for we must either remove God from all manner of causality, or confess that he invisibly assists us by a secret co-operation. For it is absurd to imagine that the help he lends us, consists in fashioning the postures of the body, or directing the corporeal motions; but in influencing our souls, and exciting the inward faculties into action by secret impulses from above; or on the contrary, by raising an aversion in the soul, to restrain us from action. It is true in ordinary affairs of life, in matters that are brought about by the ordinary way of reason, Homer ascribes the execution of them to human performance, and frequently represents his heroes calling a council in their own breast, and acting according to the dictates of reason: but in actions unaccountably daring, of a transcendent nature, there they are said to be carried away by a divine impulse or enthusiasm, and it is no longer human reason, but a god that influences the soul.

I have already observed, that Homer makes use of machines sometimes merely for ornament; this place is an

To tempt their bounties with a suppliant's art;  
 And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart ; 435  
 (Not but his soul, resentful as humane,  
 Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train ;)

instance of it ; here is no action of an uncommon nature performed, and yet Pallas directs Ulysses : Plutarch very justly observes, that whenever the heroes of Homer execute any prodigious exploit of valour, he continually introduces a deity, who assists in the performance of it ; but it is also true, that to shew the dependance of man upon the assistance of heaven, he frequently ascribes the common dictates of wisdom to the goddesses of it. If we take the act here inspired by Minerva, as it lies nakedly in Homer, it is no more than a bare command to beg ; an act, that needs not the wisdom of a goddess to command : but we are to understand it as a direction to Ulysses how to behave before the suitors upon his first appearance, how to carry on his disguise so artfully as to prevent all suspicions, and take his measures so effectually as to work his own re-establishment : in this light, the command becomes worthy of a goddess : the act of begging is only the method by which he carries on his design ; the consequence of it is the main point in view, namely, the suitors destruction. The rest is only the stratagem, by which he obtains the victory.

v. 435. *And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart :  
 (Not but his soul, resentful as humane,  
 Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending  
 train.)*

A single virtue, or act of humanity, is not a sufficient atonement for a whole life of insolence and oppression ; so that although some of the suitors should be found less guilty than the rest, yet they are still too guilty to deserve impunity.

With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive sound,

Humble he moves, imploring all around.

The proud feel pity, and relief bestow, 440

With such an image touch'd of human woe ;

Enquiring all, their wonder they confess,

And eye the man, majestic in distress.

While thus they gaze and question with their eyes,

The bold Melanthius to their thought replies. 445

My lords ! this stranger of gigantic port

The good Eumæus usher'd to your court.

Full well I mark'd the features of his face,

Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.

And is this present, swineherd ! of thy hand ? 450

Bringst thou these vagrants to infect the land ?

(Returns Antinous with retorted eye)

Objects uncouth ! to check the genial joy.

v. 438. *With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive,  
sound,*

*Humble he moves, etc.]*

Homer inserts this particularity to shew the complying nature of Ulysses in all fortunes ; he is every where *πολύτροπος*, it is his distinguishing character in the first verse of the *Odyssey*, and it is visible in every part of it. He is an artist in the trade of begging, as Eustathius observes, and knows how to become the lowest, as well as the highest station.

Homer adds, that the suitors were struck with wonder at the sight of Ulysses. This is (says Eustathius) because they had never before seen him in Ithaca, and concluded him to be a foreigner. But I rather think it is a compliment Homer pays to his hero, to represent his port and figure to be such, as though a beggar, struck them with astonishment.

Enough of these our court already grace,  
Of giant stomach, and of famish'd face.

455

Such guests Eumæus to his country brings,  
To share our feast, and lead the life of kings.

To whom the hospitable swain rejoin'd:  
Thy passion, prince, belies thy knowing mind.

Who calls, from distant nations to his own, 460

The poor, distinguish'd by their wants alone?

Round the wide world are sought those men divine

Who public structures raise, or who design;

Those to whose eyes the gods their ways reveal,

Or bless with salutary arts to heal; 465

But chief to poets such respect belongs,

By rival nations courted for their songs;

These states invite, and mighty kings admire,

Wide as the sun displays his vital fire.

It is not so with want! how few that feed 470

A wretch unhappy, merely for his need!

Unjust to me and all that serve the state,

To love Ulysses is to raise thy hate.

v. 462 *Round the wide world are sought those men divine, etc.*] This is an evidence of the great honour antiently paid to persons eminent in mechanic arts: the architect, and public artisans, *δημιουργοί*, are joined with the prophet, physician, and poet, who were esteemed almost with a religious veneration, and looked upon as public blessings. Honour was antiently given to men in proportion to the benefits they brought to society; a useless great man is a burden to the earth, while the meanest artisan is beneficial to his fellow-creatures, and useful in his generation.

For me, suffice the approbation won  
Of my great mistress, and her godlike son. 475

To whom Telemachus. No more incense

The man by nature prone to insolence:  
Injurious minds just answers but provoke——

Then turning to Antinous, thus he spoke.

Thanks to thy care! whose absolute command 480

Thus drives the stranger from our court and land.

Heav'n bless its owner with a better mind!

From envy free, to charity inclin'd.

This both Penelope and I afford:

Then, prince! be bounteous of Ulysses' board. 485

To give another's is thy hand so slow?

So much more sweet, to spoil, than to bestow?

Whence, great Telemachus! this lofty strain?

(Antinous cries with insolent disdain)

Portions like mine if ev'ry suitor gave, 490

Our walls this twelvemonth should not see the slave.

He spoke, and lifting high above the board

His pond'rous footstool, shook it at his lord.

The rest with equal hand conferr'd the bread;

He fill'd his scrip, and to the threshold sped 495

But first before Antinous stopt, and said.

Bestow, my friend! thou dost not seem the worst

Of all the Greeks, but prince like and the first:

v. 479. *Bestow, my friend!* etc ] Ulysses here acts with a prudent dissimulation; he pretends not to have understood the irony of Antinous, nor to have observed his preparation to strike him; and therefore proceeds as if he apprehended no danger. This at once shews the pati-



Then as in dignity, be first in worth,  
 And I shall praise thee thro' the boundless earth. 500  
 Once I enjoy'd in luxury of state  
 Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of great ;  
 Wealth, servants, friends, were mine in better days :  
 And hospitality was then my praise ;  
 In every sorrowing soul I pour'd delight, 505  
 And poverty stood smiling in my sight.  
 But Jove, all-governing, whose only will  
 Determines fate, and mingles good with ill,  
 Sent me (to punish my pursuit of gain)  
 With roving pyrates o'er th' Egyptian main: 510

ence of Ulysses who is inured to sufferings, and gives a foundation for the punishment of Antinous in the conclusion of the Odyssey.

It is observable, that Ulysses gives his own history in the same words as in the fourteenth book, yet varies from it in the conclusion ; he there spoke to Eumæus, and Eumæus is here present, and hears the story : How is it then that he does not observe the falsification of Ulysses, and conclude him to be an impostor ? Eustathius labours for an answer ; he imagines that Eumæus was inadvertent, or had forgot the former relation, and yet asserts that the reason why Ulysses tells the same history in part to Antinous, proceeds from a fear of detection in Eumæus. I would rather imagine that Ulysses makes the deviation, trusting to the judgment of Eumæus, who might conclude that there was some good reason why he forbears to let Antinous in the full history of his life ; especially, because he was an enemy both to Ulysses and Eumæus : he might therefore easily reflect, that the difference of his story arose from prudence and design, rather than from imposture and falsehood.

By Ægypt's silver flood our ships we moor ;  
 Our spies commission'd strait the coast explore ;  
 But impotent of mind, with lawless will  
 The country ravage, and the natives kill.  
 The spreading clamour to their city flies, 515  
 And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise :  
 The red'ning dawn reveals the hostile fields  
 Horrid with bristly spears, and gleaming shields :  
 Jove thunder'd on their side : our guilty head  
 We turn'd to flight ; the gath'ring vengeance spread  
 On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead.  
 Some few the foes in servitude detain ;  
 Death ill exchange'd for bondage and for pain !  
 Unhappy me a Cyprian took a-board,  
 And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord : 525

v. 525. *And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord.*] We are not to search too exactly into historic truth among the fictions of poetry : but it is very probable that this Dmetor was really king of Cyprus. Eustathius is of this opinion ; but it may be objected, that Cinyras was king of Cyprus in the time of Ulysses. Thus lib. XI. Iliad.

The beaming cuirass next adorn'd his breast ;  
 The same which once king Cinyras possess'd ;  
 The fame of Greece, and her assembled host,  
 Had reach'd that monarch on the Cyprian coast.

The answer is, there were almost twenty years elapsed since the mention of this breast-plate of Cinyras ; this king therefore being dead, Dmetor possess'd the Cyprian throne.

Hither, to 'scape his chains, my course I steer,  
Still curst by fortune, and insulted here !

To whom Antinous thus his rage exprest,  
What god has plagu'd us with this gormaund guest ?  
Unless at distance, wretch ! thou keep behind, } 530  
Another isle than Cyprus more unkind, }  
Another Ægypt shalt thou quickly find.  
From all thou beg'st, a bold audacious slave ;  
Nor all can give so much as thou can'st crave.  
Nor wonder I, at such profusion shown ; } 535  
Shameless they give, who give what's not their own.

The chief, retiring. Souls, like that in thee,  
Ill suit such forms of grace and dignity.  
Nor will that hand to utmost need afford  
The smallest portion of a wasteful board, } 540  
Whose luxury whole patrimonies sweeps,  
Yet starving want, amidst the riot, weeps.

The haughty suitor with resentment burns,  
And fow'rly smiling, this reply returns.  
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely throng : } 545  
And dumb for ever be thy stand'rous tongue ! }  
He said, and high the whirling tripod flung.

v. 532. *Another Egypt, etc.*] This passage is a full demonstration that the country was called Ægypt in the days of Homer, as well as the river Nilus ; for in the speech, he uses Ἀγυπῖος in the masculine gender to denote the river, and here he calls it πικρὴν Αἰγυπτὸν in the feminine, to shew that he speaks of the country: the former word agreeing with ποταμός, the latter with γαῖα.

His shoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle shock;  
 He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock;  
 But shook his thoughtful head, nor once complain'd, 550.  
 Sedate of soul, his character sustain'd,  
 And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;  
 Before his feet the well-fill'd scrip he threw,  
 And thus with semblance mild address'd the crew.

May what I speak your princely minds approve, 555  
 Ye peers and rivals in this noble love!  
 Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.  
 If when the sword our country's quarrel draws,  
 Or if defending what is justly dear,  
 From Mars impartial some broad wound we bear; 560  
 The gen'rous motive dignifies the scar.

v. 557. *Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.*  
 The reasoning of Ulysses in the original is not without some obscurity: for how can it be affirmed, that it is no great affliction to have our property invaded, and to be wounded in the defence of it? The beggar who suffers for asking an alms, has no injury done him, except the violence offered to his person; but it is a double injury, to suffer both in our persons and properties. We must therefore suppose that Ulysses means, that the importance of the cause, when our rights are invaded, is equal to the danger, and that we ought to suffer wounds, or even death, in defence of it; and that a brave man grieves not at such laudable adventures. Or perhaps Ulysses speaks only with respect to Antinous, and means that it is a greater injury to offer violence to the poor and the stranger, than to persons of greater fortune and station.

Eustathius gives a deeper meaning to the speech of Ulysses; he applies it to his present condition, and it is the same as if he had said openly, It would be no great mat-

But for mere want, how hard to suffer wrong !

Want brings enough of other ills along !

Yet if injustice never be secure,

If fiends revenge, and gods assert the poor, 565

Death shall lay low the proud aggressor's head,

And make the dust Antinous' bridal bed.

Peace, wretch ! and eat thy bread without offence,

(The suitor cry'd) or force shall drag thee hence,

Scourge thro' the public street, and cast thee there, 570

A mangled carcase for the hounds to tear.

His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,

All, ev'n the worst condemn'd ; and some reprov'd.

Was ever chief for wars like these renown'd ?

Ill fits the stranger and the poor to wound. 575

Unblest thy hand ! if this low disguise

Wander, perhaps, some inmate of the skies ;

They (curious oft of mortal actions) deign

In forms like these, to round the earth and main,

ter if I had been wounded in defence of my palace, and other properties, but to suffer only for asking an alms, this is a deep affliction. So that Ulysses speaks in general, but intends his own particular condition ; and the import of the whole is, I grieve to suffer, not upon any weighty account, but only for being poor and hungry.

v. 578. *They (curious oft of human actions) etc* ]

We have already observed, that it was the opinion of the ancients, that the gods frequently assumed an human shape. Thus Ovid of Jupiter.

—————*Summo delabor Olympo,*

*Et Deus humana lustris sub imagine terras.*



Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 225

Just and unjust recording in their mind, 580

And with sure eyes inspecting all mankind.

Telemachus, absorpt in thought severe,

Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear;

But the dark brow of silent sorrow shook:

While thus his mother to her virgins spoke. 585

"On him and his may the bright god of day

"That base, inhospitable blow repay!

The nurse replies: "If Jove receives my pray'r,

"Not one survives to breathe to morrow's air.

I refer the reader to the objections of Plato mentioned in the preceding book. It is observable that Homer puts this remarkable truth into the mouth of the suitors, to shew that it is certain and undeniable, when it is attested even by such persons as had no piety or religion.

v. 582. *Telemachus*——

*Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tears.]*

This is spoken with particular judgment; Telemachus is here to act the part of a wise man, not of a tender son; he restrains his tears lest they should betray his father, it being improbable that he should weep for a vagabond and beggar. We find he has profited by the instructions of Ulysses, and practises the injunctions given in the former book.

——— *If scorn insult my reverend age,*

*Bear it, my son; repress thy rising rage.*

*If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repell,*

*Bear it, my son, tho' thy brave heart rebell.*

Telemachus struggles against the yearnings of nature, and shews himself to be a master of his passions; he must therefore be thought to exert an act of wisdom, not of insensibility.

All, all are foes, and mischief is their end ; 590  
 Antinous most to gloomy death a friend,  
 (Replies the queen ;) the stranger begg'd their grace,  
 And melting pity soften'd ev'ry face ;  
 From ev'ry other hand redress he found,  
 But fell Antinous answer'd with a wound. 595  
 Amidst her maids thus spoke the prudent queen,  
 Then bade Eumæus call the pilgrim in.  
 Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,  
 If or his certain eye, or list'ning ear  
 Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring lord. 600  
 Thus she, and good Eumæus took the word.  
 A private audience if thy grace impart,  
 The stranger's words may ease the royal heart :  
 His sacred eloquence in balm distills,  
 And the sooth'd heart with secret pleasure fills. 605  
 Three days have spent their beams, three nights have run  
 Their silent journey, since his tale begun,  
 Unfinish'd yet, and yet I thirst to hear !  
 As when some heav'n taught poet charms the ear,  
 (Suspending sorrow with celestial strain 610  
 Breath'd from the gods to soften human pain)  
 Time steals away with unregarded wing,  
 And the soul hears him, tho' he cease to sing.  
 Ulysses late he saw on Cretan ground,  
 (His father's guest) for Minos' birth renown'd. 615  
 He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er,  
 With boundless treasure, from Thesprotia's shore.

To this the queen. The wand'rer let me hear,  
While yon luxurious race indulge their cheer,  
Devour the grazing ox and browsing goat, 620  
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.  
For where's an arm, like thine Ulysses strong,  
To curb wild riot and to punish wrong?

She spoke. Telemachus then sneez'd aloud;  
Constrain'd, his nostril echo'd thro' the croud. 625

dorus Siculus thus writes of Minos: 'He was the son of  
'Jupiter and Europa, who was fabled to be carried by a  
'bull; (that is, in a ship called the bull, or that had the  
'image of a bull carved upon its prow) into Crete. Here  
'Minos reigned, and built many cities; he established  
'many laws among the Cretans; he also provided a na-  
'vy, by which he subdued many of the adjacent islands.  
'The expression in the Greek will bear a two-fold sense;  
'and implies either, where *Minos was born*, or where  
'the *descendants of Minos reign*: for Idomeneus, who  
'governed Crete in the days of Ulysses, was a descendant  
'of Minos, from his son Deucalion.'

Homer mentions it as an honour to Crete, to have gi-  
ven birth to so great a law-giver as Minos; and it is u-  
niversally true, that every great man is an honour to his  
country: Athens did not give reputation to learned men,  
but learned men to Athens.

v. 624. ——— *Telemachus then sneez'd aloud.*] Eustathius fully explains the nature of this omen; for sneezing was reckoned ominous both by the Greeks and Romans. While Penelope utters these words, Telemachus sneezes; Penelope accepts the omen, and expects the words to be verified. The original of the veneration paid to sneezing is this: The head is the most sacred part of the body, the seat of thought and reason: now the sneeze coming from the head, the ancients looked upon it as a sign or omen, and believed it to be sent by Ju-

The smiling queen the happy omen blest :

“ So may these impious fall, by fate oppress !

Then to Eumæus : Bring the stranger, fly !

And if my questions meet a true reply,

Grac'd with a decent robe he shall retire,

630

A gift in season which his wants require.

Thus spoke Penelope. Eumæus flies

In duteous haste, and to Ulysses cries.

The queen invites thee, venerable guest !

A secret instinct moves her troubled breast

635

piter ; therefore they regarded it with a kind of adoration : the reader will have a full idea of the nature of the omen of sneezing here mentioned, from a singular instance in lib. 3. of Xenophon, in his expedition of Cyrus. Xenophon having ended a short speech to his soldiers with these words, viz. “ We have many reasons to hope for “ preservation ;” they were scarce uttered, when a certain soldier sneezed : the whole army took the omen, and at once paid adoration to the gods ; then Xenophon resuming his discourse, proceeded, “ Since, my fellow-soldiers, at the mention of our preservation, Jupiter has “ sent this omen, etc.” So that Xenophon fully explains Homer. Sneezing was likewise reckoned ominous by the Romans. Thus Catullus.

*Hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante  
Dextram sternuit adprobationem.*

Thus also Propertius.

*Num tibi nascenti primis, mea vita, diebus  
Aridus argutum sternuit omen amor.*

We find in all these instances that sneezing was constantly received as a good omen, or a sign of approbation from

Of her long absent lord from thee to gain  
Some light, and soothe her soul's eternal pain,  
If true, if faithful thou, her grateful mind  
Of decent robes a present has design'd:  
So finding favour in the royal eye, 640  
Thy other wants her subjects shall supply.

Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)  
My words shall dictate, and my lips shall guide.  
To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,  
In equal woes, alas ! involv'd by heav'n. 645  
Much of his fates I know ; but check'd by fear  
I stand : the hand of violence is here :

the Gods. In these ages we pay an idle superstition to sneezing, but it is ever looked upon as a bad omen, and we cry *God bless you*, upon hearing it, as the Greeks in latter times said *Ζῆνι* or *Ζεῦ σάκεν*. We are told this custom arose from a mortal distemper that affected the head, and threw the patient into convulsive sneezings, that occasioned his death.

I will only add from Eustathius, that Homer expresses the loudness of the sneezing, to give a reason why Penelope heard it, she being in an apartment at some distance from Telemachus.

The sneezing likewise gives us the reason why Penelope immediately commands Eumæus to introduce the beggar into her presence ; the omen gave her hopes to hear of Ulysses, she saw the beggar was a stranger, and a traveller, and therefore expected he might be able to give her some information.

v. 644. *To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,*

*In equal woes, alas ! involv'd by heav'n.]*

These words bear a double sense, one applicable to the speaker, the other to the reader : the reader, who knows this beggar to be Ulysses, is pleased with the concealed



Here boundless wrongs the starry skies invade,  
And injur'd suppliants seek in vain for aid,  
Let for a space the pensive queen attend, 650  
Nor claim my story till the sun descend;  
Then in such robes as suppliants may require,  
Compos'd and chearful by the genial fire,  
When loud uproar and lawless riot cease,  
Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace. 655

Swift to the queen returns the gentle swain :  
And, say (she cries) does fear, or shame, detain  
The cautious stranger ? With the begging kind  
Shame suits but ill. Eumæus thus rejoind :

He only asks a more propitious hour, 660  
And shuns (who wou'd not ?) wicked men in pow'r ;  
At ev'ning mild (meet season to confer)  
By turns to question, and by turns to hear.

Whoe'er this guest (the prudent queen replies)  
His ev'ry step and ev'ry thought is wise. 665  
For men like these on earth he shall not find,  
In all the miscreant race of humankind.

Thus she. Eumæus all her words attends,  
And parting, to the suitor pow'rs descends :  
There seeks Telemachus, and thus apart 670  
In whispers breathes the fondness of his heart.

meaning, and hears with pleasure the beggar affirming  
that he is fully instructed in the misfortunes of Ulysses :  
but speaking in the character of a beggar, he keeps Eu-  
mæus in ignorance, who believes he is reciting the ad-  
ventures of a friend, while he really gives his own hi-  
story.

The time, my lord, invites me to repair  
 Hence to the lodge ; my charge demands my care.  
 These sons of murder thirst thy life to take ;  
 O guard it, guard it, for thy servant's sake ! 675

Thanks to my friend, he cries ; but now the hour  
 Of night draws on, go seek the rural bow'r :  
 But first refresh : and at the dawn of day  
 Hither a victim to the gods convey.  
 Our life to heav'n's immortal pow'rs we trust, 680  
 Safe in their care, for heav'n protects the just.

Observant of his voice, Eumæus fate  
 And fed recumbent on a chair of state.  
 Then instant rose, and as he mov'd along  
 'Twas riot all amid the suitor throng, } 685  
 They feast, they dance, and raise the mirthful song.  
 'Till now declining tow'rd the close of day,  
 The sun obliquely shot his dewy ray.

v. 676. —*but now the hour of night draws on*—]  
 The reader may look back to the beginning of the pre-  
 ceding book, for the explication of δαίλον ἡμας, here men-  
 tioned by Homer.

This book does not fully comprehend the space of one  
 day : It begins with the morning, and ends before night,  
 so that the time here mentioned by the poet, is the even-  
 ing of the thirty ninth day.



# O D Y S S E Y.

## BOOK XVIII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

#### The fight of Ulysses and Irus.

*The beggar Irus insults Ulysses; the suitors promote the quarrel, in which Irus is worsted, and miserably handled. Penelope defends, and receives the presents of the suitors. The dialogue of Ulysses with Eurymachus.*

WHILE fix'd in thought the pensive hero sat,

A mendicant approach'd the royal gate;

A surly vagrant of the giant kind,

The stain of manhood, of a coward mind;

Homer has been severely blamed for describing Ulysses, a king, entering the lists with a beggar: Rapin affirms, that he demeans himself by engaging with an unequal adversary. The objection would be unanswerable, if Ulysses appeared in his royal character: but it is as necessary in epic poetry as on the theatre, to adapt the behaviour of every person to the character he is to represent, whether real or imaginary. Would it not have been ridiculous to have represented him, while he was disguised in the garb of a beggar, refusing the combat, because he knew

From feast to feast, insatiate to devour

5

He flew, attendant on the genial hour;

When on his mother's knees a babe he lay,

She nam'd Arnæus on his natal day.

himself to be a king? and would not such a conduct have endangered a discovery? Ought we not rather to look upon this episode as an instance of the greatness of the calamities of Ulysses, who is reduced to such uncommon extremities as to be set upon a level with the meanest of wretches?

v. 8. *She nam'd Arnæus*—] It seems probable from this passage, that the mother gave the name to the child in the days of Homer; though perhaps not without the concurrence of the father: Thus in the scriptures it is said of Leah, that *she bare a son and called his name Reuben*; and again, *she called his name Simeon*; and the same is frequently repeated both of Leah and Rachel. In the age of Aristophanes, the giving a name to the child seems to have been a divided prerogative between the father and mother; for in his *Néphelai* there is a dispute between Strephiades and his wife, concerning the name of their son: the wife was of noble birth, and would therefore give him a noble name; the husband was a plain villager, and was rather for a name that denoted frugality: but the woman not waving the least branch of her prerogative, they compromised the affair, by giving the child a compounded name that implied both frugality and chivalry, derived from *φειδω* to spare, and *ἵππος* an horse; and the young cavalier's name was Phidippides. Eustathius affirms, that antiently the mother named the child; and the scholiast upon Aristophanes in *avib.* quotes a fragment from Euripides to this purpose, from a play called *Ageus*:

Τὴν δὲ μᾶτις ἐν δέκατῃ τῇον ὠνόμασι.  
 ci belingub eww on sldw and belingub eww on sldw

What was the name given on the tenth day by the mo-



But Irus his associates call'd the boy,  
 Practis'd, the common messenger to fly,  
 Irus, a name expressive of th' employ.

From his own roof with meditated blows  
 He strove to drive the man of mighty woes.

Hence dotard, hence ! and timely speed thy way,  
 Lest dragg'd in vengeance, thou repent thy stay ;  
 See how with nods assent yon princely train !  
 But honouring age, in mercy I refrain ;  
 In peace away ! lest if persuasions fail,  
 This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.

To whom with stern regards : O insolence,  
 Indecently to rail without offence !

What bounty gives, without a rival share,  
 I ask, what harms not thee, to breathe this air :

'ther to the child ?' Dacier tells us that the name of Ar-næus was prophetic ὑπὸ τῆς ἀρνῆος, 'from the sheep the  
 'glutton would devour when he came to manhood ;' but  
 this is mere fancy, and it is no reason because he proved  
 a glutton, that therefore the name foretold it : one might  
 rather think the fondness of the mother toward her in-  
 fant, suggested a very different view : she gave the name  
 according to her wishes, and flattered herself that he would  
 prove a very rich man, 'a man of many flocks and  
 'herds : ' and therefore she called him Ἀρνῆος : and this  
 is the more probable, because all riches originally consist-  
 ed in flocks and herds.

v. 11. *Irus, a name expressive of th' employ.* ] To un-  
 derstand this, we must have recourse to the derivation of  
 the word Irus ; it comes from ἑρῶ, which signifies *nuntio* ;  
 Irus was therefore so called, because he was a public mes-  
 senger ; and Irus bears that name, as the messenger of  
 the gods ; ἱρεὺς, ἀπαρχιστῶν ; ἱρίς, Ἀρχιστῶν. Hesychius.

Alike on alms we both precarious live:  
 And canst thou envy, when the great relieve?  
 Know from the bounteous heav'n's all riches flow,  
 And what man gives, the gods by man bestow;  
 Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,  
 Lest I imprint my vengeance in thy blood;  
 Old as I am, should once my fury burn,  
 How wouldst thou fly, nor ev'n in thought return?

Mere woman glutton! (thus the churl reply'd)  
 A tongue so flippant, with a throat so wide!  
 Why cease I, gods! to dash those teeth away,  
 Like some vile boar's, that greedy of his prey  
 Uproots the bearded corn? rise, try the fight,  
 Gird well thy loins, approach, and feel my might:

v. 34. ——— *To dash those teeth away,  
 Like some wild boar's.*]

These words refer to a custom that prevailed in former ages; it was allowed to strike out the teeth of any beast which the owner found in his grounds; Eustathius informs us, that this was a custom or law among the people of Cyprus; but from what Homer here speaks, it seems to have been a general practice; at least it was in use among the Ithacans.

v. 37. *Gird well thy loins.*] We may gather from hence the manner of the single combat; the champions fought naked, and only made use of a cincture round the loins out of decency. Homer directly affirms it, when Ulysses prepares for the fight,

Then girding his strong loins, the king prepares  
 To close in combat, and his body bares;  
 Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs  
 By just degrees like well turn'd columns rise;

Sure of defeat, before the peers engage ;

Unequal fight ! when youth contends with age !

Thus in a wordy war their tongues display 40

More fierce intents, preluding to the fray ;

Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,

Thus with loud laughter to the suitor train.

This happy day in mirth, my friends, employ,

And lo ! the gods conspire to crown our joy. 45

See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,

Yon surly mendicants contentious stand ;

Why urge we not to blows ? Well pleas'd they spring

Swift from their seats, and thick'ning form a ring.

To whom Antinous. Lo ! enrich'd with blood 50

A kid's well fatt'd entrails (tasteful food !)

On glowing embers lie ; on him bestow

The choicest portion who subdues his foe ;

Grant him unrival'd in these walls to stay,

The sole attendant on the genial day. 55

The lords applaud ! Ulysses then with art,

And fears well feign'd, disguis'd his dauntless heart :

Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,

And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong.

Thus Diomed in the Iliad girds his friend Euryalus when  
he engages Epæus.

Officious with the cincture girds him round.

The speeches here are short, and the periods remarkably  
concise, suitable to the nature of anger. The reader may  
consult the annotations on the 20th book, concerning the  
goats entrails mentioned by Antinous.

Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe,  
 Say is it baseness, to decline the foe?  
 Hard conflict! when calamity and age 60  
 With vigorous youth, unknown to cares, engage!  
 Yet fearful of disgrace, to try the day  
 Imperious hunger bids, and I obey;  
 But swear, impartial arbiters of right,  
 Swear, to stand neutral while we cope in fight. 65

The peers assent: when strait his sacred head  
 Telemachus uprais'd, and sternly said,

Stranger, if prompted to chastise the wrong  
 Of this bold insolent, confide, be strong!  
 Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow, 70  
 That instant makes Telemachus his foe;  
 And these my † friends shall guard the sacred ties  
 Of hospitality, for they are wise.

† Antinous and Eurymachus.

v. 64. *But swear, impartial arbiters of right,*

*Swear, to stand neutral while we cope in fight.]*

This is a very necessary precaution: Ulysses had reason to apprehend that the suitors would interest themselves in the cause of Irus, who was their daily attendant, rather than in that of a perfect stranger. Homer takes care to point out the prudence of Ulysses upon every emergence: besides, he raises this fray between two beggars into some dignity, by requiring the sanction of an oath to regulate the laws of the combat. It is the same solemnity used in the Iliad between Paris and Menelaus, and represents these combatants engaging with the formality of two heroes.

v. 72. *And these my friends shall guard the sacred ties  
 Of hospitality, for they are wise.]*

Then girding his strong loins, the king prepares  
To close in combat, and his body bares ; 75  
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs  
By just degrees like well turn'd columns rise :  
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,  
And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong,  
(Attendant on her chief :) the suitor croud 80  
With wonder gaze, and gazing speak aloud.

Irus, alas ! shall Irus be no more,  
Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour !  
Gods ! how his nerves a matchless strength proclaim :  
Swell o'er his well-strung limbs, and brace his frame ! 85  
Then pale with fears, and sick'ning at the sight,  
They dragg'd th' unwilling Irus to the fight ;  
From his blank visage fled the coward blood,  
And his flesh trembled as aghast he stood :

When Telemachus speaks these words, he is to be supposed to turn to Eurymachus and Antinous, to whom he directs his discourse. It must be allowed that this is an artful piece of flattery in Telemachus, and he makes use of it to engage these two princes, who were the chief of the suitors, on his side.

v. 82. *Irus, alas ! shall Irus be no more.* This is literally translated : I confess I with Homer had omitted these little collusions of words : he sports with *Ἴρος ἄϊρος*. It is a low conceit, alluding to the derivation of Irus, and means that he shall never more be a messenger. The translation, though it be verbal, yet is free from ambiguity, and the joke concealed in *ἄϊρος* : this will be evident if we substitute another name in the place of Irus ; we may say Achilles shall be no longer Achilles, without descending from the gravity of epic poetry.



O that such baseness should disgrace the light! 90  
O hide it, death, in everlasting night!

(Exclaims Antinous) can a vigorous foe  
Meanly decline to combat age and woe?

But hear me, wretch! if recreant in the fray,  
That huge bulk yield this ill-contested day, 95  
Instant thou sail'st, to Echetus resign'd,  
A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant kind,

v. 90. *O that such baseness should disgrace the light!*  
*O hide it, death, etc.]*

Eustathius gives us an instance of the deep penetration of some critics, in their comments upon these words; they have found in them the philosophy of Pythagoras, and the transmigration of souls. The verse stands thus in Homer.

Νῦν μὲν μὴτ' εἴης βυγῶν, μὴτε γένοιο,

which they imagine is to be understood after this manner; 'I wish thou hadst never been born! and mayst thou never exist again, or have a second being!' to recite such an absurdity, is to refute it. The verse, when literally rendered, bears this import; 'I wish thou wert now dead, or hadst never been born!' an imprecation very natural to persons in anger, who seldom give themselves time to speak with profound allusions to philosophy.

v. 96. *Instant thou sail'st, to Echetus resign'd,*  
*A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant kind.]*

The tradition concerning Echetus stands thus: he was king of Epirus, the son of Euchenor and Phlogea; he had a daughter called Metope; or, as others affirm, Amphisa: she being corrupted by Echmodicus, Echetus put out her eyes, and condemned her to grind pieces of iron made in the resemblance of corn; and told her she should recover her sight when she had ground the iron into flour. He invited Echmodicus to an entertainment, and cut off the extremities from all parts of his body, and cast them to

Who casts thy mangled ears and nose a prey  
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.

While with indignant scorn he sternly spoke, 100

In ev'ry joint the trembling Irus shook ;  
Now front to front each frowning champion stands,  
And poises high in air his adverse hands.

The chief yet doubts, or to the shades below  
To fell the giant at one vengeful blow, 105

Or save his life ; and soon his life to save  
The king resolves, for mercy sways the brave.

That instant Irus his huge arm extends,  
Full on the shoulder the rude weight descends :  
The sage Ulysses, fearful to disclose 110

The hero latent in the man of woes,  
Check'd half his might : yet rising to the stroke,  
His jaw-bone dash'd ; the crashing jaw-bone broke :  
Down dropp'd he stupid from the stunning wound,  
His feet extended, quivering beat the ground, 115

the dogs ; at length being seized with madness, he fed  
upon his own flesh, and died. This history is confirmed,  
lib. 4. of Apollonius.

Ἵδρις Ἐχέτος γλήαις ἐνὶ χάλκῳ κίηρα  
Πῆξε θυγατρός ἑῆς σόνοντι δὲ κάρφεται οἷτῳ,  
Ὀρφναίῃ ἐνὶ χαλκὸν ἀλίστρευσσα καλιῇ.

I wonder how this last quotation escaped the diligence  
of Eustathius. Dacier affirms, that no mention is made  
of Echetus by any of the Greek historians, and therefore  
she has recourse to another tradition, preserved by Eusta-  
thius, who tells us, that Echetus was contemporary with  
Homer, that the poet had been ill used by him, and there-  
fore took this revenge for his inhumanity.

His mouth and nostrils spout a purple flood,  
His teeth all shatter'd rush immix'd with blood.

The peers transported, as outstretch'd he lies,  
With bursts of laughter rend the vaulted skies:

Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the wound, 120

His length of carcase trailing prints the ground;

Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,

'Till propp'd reclining on the palace walls;

Then to his hand a staff the victor gave,

And thus with just reproach address'd the slave. 125

There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign

A dreaded tyrant o'er the bestial train!

But mercy to the poor and stranger show,

Lest heav'n in vengeance send some mightier woe.

Scornful he spoke, and o'er his shoulder flung 130

The broad-patch'd scrip; the scrip in tatters hung

Ill-join'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.

Then turning short, disdain'd a further stay,

But to the palace measur'd back the way.

There as he rested, gath'ring in a ring 135

The peers with smiles address their unknown king:

Stranger, may Jove and all th' aerial pow'rs,

With ev'ry blessing crown thy happy hours!

Our freedom to thy prowess'd arm we owe

From bold intrusion of thy coward foe; 140

v. 140. *From bold intrusion of thy coward foe.*] The word in the Greek is ἀναλτον γάρ τισι ἀναλτον is a voracious appetite, a stomach that nothing can satisfy: Hesychius thus explains it: ἀναλτον ἀναυξες, τῷ ἐστὶν ἰκανόν, ἢ ἀπλήρωτον παρὰ τὴν ἄλσιν. But there is undoubtedly

Instant the flying sail the slave shall wing  
To Echetus, the monster of a king.

While pleas'd he hears, Antinous bears the food,  
A kid's well fatt'd entrails, rich with blood :

The bread from canisters of shining mold 145

Amphinomus ! and wines that laugh in gold,  
And oh ! (he mildly cries) may heaven display  
A beam of glory o'er thy future day !

Alas the brave too oft is doom'd to bear  
The gripes of poverty, and stings of care. 150

To whom with thought mature the king replies :  
The tongue speaks wisely, when the soul is wise ;  
Such was thy father ! in imperial state,

Great without vice, that oft attends the great :  
Nor from the fire art thou the son declin'd ; 155  
Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind !

an error in Hesychius ; instead of *ixavov* we should read *ioxvov*, that is, *meager*, or *a stomach that appears always unfilled*. The general moral that we are to gather from the behaviour of Ulysses and Irus, is that insolence and boasting are signs of cowardice.

v. 156. *Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind.*] There never was a finer lecture of morality read in any of the schools of the philosophers, than this which Ulysses delivers to Amphinomus ; he ushers it in with great solemnity, and speaks to all mankind in the person of Amphinomus. It is quoted by a variety of authors ; Pliny in his preface to his natural history, lib. 7. has wrote a dissertation on this sentence.

*Of all that breathes or grov'ling creeps on earth,  
Most vain is man, etc.*

Aristotle and Maximus Tyrius quote it ; and Plutarch  
X 2

Of all that breathes or grov'ling creeps on earth  
 Most vain is man ! calamitous by birth.  
 To-day with pow'r elate, in strength he blooms ;  
 The haughty creature on that pow'r presumes : 160  
 Anon from heav'n a sad reverse he feels ;  
 Untaught to bear, 'gainst heav'n the wretch rebels.  
 For man is changeful as his bliss or woe,  
 Too high when prosp'rous, when distress too low.

twice refers to it. Homer considers man both with respect to the errors of the mind, and the calamities incident to the body ; and upon a review of all mortal creatures, he attributes to man the unhappy superiority in miseries. But indeed Homer is so plain that he needs no interpretation, and any words but his own must disgrace him. Besides, this speech is beautiful in another view, and excellently sets forth the forgiving temper of Ulysses : he saw that all the sparks of virtue and humanity were not extinguished in Amphinomus ; he therefore warns him with great solemnity to forsake the suitors ; he imprints conviction upon his mind, though ineffectually, and shews by it that when he falls by the hand of Ulysses in the succeeding parts of the Odyssey, his death is not a revenge but a punishment.

v. 163. *For man is changeful as his bliss or woe.* ] Most of the interpreters have greatly misrepresented these words.

Τοῖς γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίου ἀνθρώπων

Οἷον ἐκ ἡμερῶν ἀγῆσι.

They thus translate it, *talis mens hominum, qualem deus suggerit* : or, 'Such is the mind of man, as heaven inspires : ' but this is an error, for οἷον cannot refer to νόος but to ἡμερῶν and the sentence is thus to be rendered, *Talis mens hominum, qualem diem deus inducit* ; that is, 'The mind of man changes with the complexion of the day, as heaven sends happiness or misery ; ' or as in the translation,



There was a day, when with the scornful great 165

I swell'd in pomp, and arrogance of state ;

Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs ;

And us'd that pow'r to justify my wrongs.

Then let not man be proud : but firm of mind,

Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign'd ; 170

Be dumb when heav'n afflicts ! unlike yon train

Of haughty spoilers, insolently vain ;

Who make their queen and all her wealth a prey :

But vengeance and Ulysses wing their way.

O may'st thou, favour'd by some guardian pow'r, 175

Far, far be distant in that deathful hour ?

For sure I am, if stern Ulysses breathe,

These lawless riots end in blood and death.

Then to the Gods the rosy juice he pours,

And the drain'd goblet to the chief restores. 180

Stung to the soul, o'ercastr with holy dread,

He shook the graceful honours of his head ;

His boding mind the future woe forestalls,

In vain ! by great Telemachus he falls,

*For man is changeful as his bliss or woe,*

*Too high when prosp'rous when distressed too low.*

The reader will be convinced that the construction requires this sense, by joining the preposition with the verb, ἐπὶ with ἄγῃσι and rendering it, οἷον ἡμᾶς ἐπ' ἄγῃσι ; nothing being more frequent than such a division of the preposition from the verb among the Greeks. It must be allowed, that Homer gives a very unhappy, yet too just a picture, of human nature : Man is too apt to be proud and insolent in prosperity, and mean and abject in adversity ; and those men who are most overbearing in an happy state, are always most base and mean in the day of affliction.

For Pallas seals his doom : All sad he turns 185  
To join the peers, resumes his throne and mourns.

Mean-while Minerva with instinctive fires  
Thy soul, Penelope, from heav'n inspires;  
With flatt'ring hopes the suitors to betray,  
And seem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day, 190  
Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise,  
And crown the mother and the wife with praise.

v. 189. *With flatt'ring hopes the suitors to betray.*] The Greek is very concise, and the expression uncommon, *ὅπως περὶ αὐτοῖς θυμὸν μνησέων*; that is, Penelope thus acted that she might dilate the heart of the suitors; meaning (as Eustathius observes) that she might give them false hopes by appearing in their company; for the heart shrinks and is contracted by sorrow and despair, and is again dilated by hope or joy: this is I believe literally true, the spirits flow briskly when we are in joy, and a new pulse is given to the blood, which necessarily must dilate the heart: on the contrary, when we are in sorrow the spirits are languid, and the blood moves less actively; and therefore the heart shrinks and contracts, the blood wanting vigour to dilate and expand it.

v. 191. *Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise.*] This is solely the act of Minerva; for Penelope is ignorant that she is to appear before her husband. This interview is excellently managed by Homer: Ulysses is to be convinced of his wife's fidelity; to bring this about, he introduces her upon the public stage, where her husband stands as a common unconcerned spectator, and hears her express her love for him in the warmest terms: here is no room for art or design, because she is ignorant that she speaks before Ulysses; and therefore her words must be supposed to proceed from the heart. This gives us a reason why Homer makes her dwell at large upon her passion for Ulysses, and paint it in the strongest colours, viz. to

Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,

Thus with a transient smile the matron cries.

Eurynome ! to go where riot reigns 195

I feel an impulse, tho' my soul disdains ;

To my lov'd son the snares of death to show,

And in the traitor friend unmask the foe ;

evidence her chastity, and urge Ulysses to hasten the destruction of the suitors, by convincing him that she is able no longer to delude the marriage hour. But then it may be objected, if Penelope's sole design was to give a false hope to the suitors, does she not take a very wrong method, by speaking so very tenderly of Ulysses? is not this a more probable reason for despair, than hope? It is true, it would have been so, if in the conclusion of her speech she had not artfully added,

*But when my son grows man, the royal sway*

*Resign, and happy be thy bridal day!*

So that Telemachus being now grown up to maturity, the suitors concluded that the nuptial hour was at hand. If then we consider the whole conduct of Penelope in this book, it must be allowed to be very refined and artful; she observes a due regard towards Ulysses, by shewing she is not to be perswaded to marry; and yet by the same words she gives the suitors hopes that the day is almost come when she intends to celebrate her nuptials; she manages so dextrously, as to perswade without a promise; and for this reason the words are put into the mouth of Ulysses, and it is Ulysses who gives the hopes, rather than Penelope.

v. 193. *Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,*

*Thus with a transient smile the matron cries.]*

Homer gives us a very beautiful and just image in these words. In the Iliad he used a similar expression concerning Andromache, *δακρυόεν γελᾶσα*; *a smile chastified with tears*. 'Αεχέον δ' ἐγέλασεν here bears the same import.

Who smooth of tongue, in purpose insincere,  
Hides fraud in smiles, while death is ambush'd there. 200

Go warn thy son, nor be the warning vain,  
(Reply'd the sagest of the royal train)

But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd descend;  
Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend;

The tide of flowing tears a-while suppress; 205

Tears but indulge the sorrow, not repress.

Some joy remains: To thee a son is giv'n,  
Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.

Ah me! forbear, returns the queen, forbear;

Oh! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care! 210

No more I bathe, since he no longer sees

Those charms, for whom alone I wish'd to please.

v. 207. ——— *To thee a son is giv'n,*

*Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.*

I am not certain that this is the exact sense of Homer; Dacier understands him very differently. Eurynome (observes that author) is not endeavouring to comfort Penelope because her son is now come to years of maturity; her purpose is, to shew the necessity she has to have recourse to art, to assist her beauty: for (adds she) your son is grown a man; meaning that a lady who has a son twenty years old, must have lost her natural beauty, and has occasion to be obliged to art to give her an artificial one. This I confess is too true, but it seems a little too ludicrous for epic poetry. I have followed a different sense, that gives us a far nobler image; conformable to that verse of Horace.

*Quid voveat dulci nutricula majus alumno,*

*Quam sapere, etc.*

This agrees with the tenor of Euryclea's speech, and is a foundation of great comfort to Penelope.

The day that bore Ulysses from this coast.  
 Blasted the little bloom these cheeks could boast.  
 But instant bid Autonoe descend, 215  
 Instant Hippodame our steps attend;  
 Ill suits it, female, virtue to be seen  
 Alone indecent, in the walks of men.

Then while Eurynome the mandate bears,  
 From heav'n Minerva shoots with guardian cares: 220  
 O'er all her senses, as the couch she preſt,  
 She pours a pleasing, deep and death-like rest,  
 With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,  
 Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her charms,  
 In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires, 225  
 (Immortal gifts! to kindle soft desires)  
 From limb to limb an air majestic sheds,  
 And the pure ivory o'er her bosom spreads.  
 Such Venus shines, when with a measur'd bound  
 She smoothly gliding swims th' harmonious round, 230  
 When with the Graces in the dance she moves,  
 And fires the gazing Gods with ardent loves.  
 Then to the skies her flight Minerva bends,  
 And to the queen the damsel train descends:

v. 221. *O'er all her senses, as the couch she preſt,  
 She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.*]

This is an admirable stroke of art, to shew the determined resolution of Penelope, to forbear the endeavour of making her person agreeable in any eyes but those of Ulysses: a goddess is obliged to cast her into an involuntary repose, and to supply an adventitious grace while she sleeps.

v. 233. *Then to the skies her flight Minerva bends.*]  
 We see Penelope is a woman of so much wisdom, as to be



Wak'd at their steps, her flowing eyes uncloſe; 235  
The tear ſhe wipes, and thus renews her woes.

Howe'er 'tis well, that ſleep a while can free,  
With ſoft forgetfulneſs, a wretch like me!

Oh! were it giv'n to yield this tranſient breath,  
Send, oh! Diana, ſend the ſleep of death! 240

Why muſt I waſte a tedious life in tears,

Nor bury in the ſilent grave my cares?

O my Ulyſſes! ever honour'd name!

For thee I mourn till death diſſolves my frame.

Thus wailing, ſlow and ſadly ſhe deſcends, 245  
On either hand a damſel train attends:

Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,

Radiant before the gazing peers ſhe ſtands;

A veil tranſlucent o'er her brow diſplay'd,

Her beauty ſeems, and only ſeems, to ſhade: 250

Sudden ſhe lightens in their dazled eyes,

And ſudden flames in ev'ry boſom riſe;

They ſend their eager ſouls with ev'ry look,

'Till ſilence thus th' imperial matron broke:

the favourite of Minerva. She acts in every point with the higheſt diſcretion, and is inconſolable for her huſband; yet the poet forbears to let her into the ſecret that Ulyſſes is returned: this is udoubtedly an intended ſatire, and Homer means, that a woman in every point diſcreet, is ſtill to be ſuſpected of loquacity: this ſeems to have been the real ſentiment of Homer, which he more fully declares in the eleventh Odysſey.

*When earneſt to explore thy ſecret breaſt,*

*Unfold ſome triſtle, but conceal the reſt;*

*For ſince of womankind ſo few are juſt,*

*Think all are falſe, nor ev'n the faithful truſt.*

O why! my son, why now no more appears 255  
 That warmth of soul that urg'd thy younger years?  
 Thy riper days no growing worth impart,  
 A man in stature, still a boy in heart!  
 Thy well knit frame unprofitably strong,  
 Speaks thee an hero from a n hero sprung: 260  
 But the just gods in vain those gifts bestow,  
 O wise alone in form, and brave in show!  
 Heav'ns! could a stranger feel oppression's hand  
 Beneath thy roof, and could'st thou tamely stand?  
 If thou the stranger's righteous cause decline, 265  
 His is the suff'rance, but the shame is thine.

To whom with filial awe, the prince returns:  
 That gen'rous soul with just resentment burns,  
 Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow  
 For others good, and melt at other's woe: 270  
 But impotent these riots to repel,  
 I bear their outrage, tho' my soul rebel:  
 Helpless amid the snares of death I tread,  
 And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread:  
 But now no crime is theirs: this wrong proceeds 275  
 From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.

v. 275. ———— *this wrong proceeds*  
*From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.]*

Eustathius informs us, that we are here to understand the fray between Irus and Ulysses. Penelope refers to the violence intended to be offered to Ulysses, when the footstool was thrown at him by Antinous; we find that she was acquainted with that assault from her speech in the preceding book. In reality, the queen was ignorant of the combat between Irus and Ulysses; but Telemachus misun-

O would to Jove ! or her whose arms display  
 The shield of Jove ! or him who rules the day !  
 That yon proud suitors, who licentious tread  
 These courts, within these courts like Irus bleed : 280  
 Whose loose head tottering as with wine oppress'd,  
 Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast ;  
 Pow'rlless to move, his staggr'ing feet deny  
 The coward wretch the privilege to fly.

Then to the queen Eurymachus replies : 285  
 O justly lov'd, and not more fair than wise !  
 Should Greece thro' all her hundred states survey  
 Thy finish'd charms, all Greece would own thy sway,  
 In rival crouds contest the glorious prize,  
 Dispeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes : 290  
 O woman ! loveliest of the lovely kind,  
 In body perfect, and compleat in mind !

derstands her with design, and makes an apology for the suitors, fearing to raise a further disorder, or provoke them to some more violent act of resentment.

v. 288. — *All Greece would own thy sway, etc.*] Homer expresses Greece by Ἰασον Ἀργος, *Iasian Argos*. The word properly (as Eustathius observes) denotes the *Morea* or *Peloponnesus*; so called from *Iasus* the son of *Argos*, and *Io* king of that country. Strabo agrees with Eustathius. Chapman wonderfully mistakes Homer, and explains his own mistake in a paraphrase of six lines.

*Most wise Icarus' daughter, if all those  
 That did for Colchos vent'rous sail dispose,  
 For that rich purchase ; had before but seen  
 Earth's richer prize, in th' Ithacensian queen,  
 They had not made that voyage ; but to you  
 Would all their virtues, all their beings vow.*

Ah me! returns the queen, when from this shore  
 Ulysses sail'd, then beauty was no more!  
 The gods decreed these eyes no more should keep 295  
 There wonted grace, but only serve to weep.  
 Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,  
 My virtues last; my brightest charm is love.  
 Now, grief, thou all art mine! -the gods o'ercast  
 My soul with woes, that long, ah long must last! 300  
 Too faithfully my heart retains the day  
 That sadly tore my royal lord away:  
 He grasp'd my hand, and oh my spouse! I leave  
 Thy arms (he cry'd) perhaps to find a grave:  
 Fame speaks the Trojans bold; they boast the skill 305  
 To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,  
 To dart the spear, and guide the rushing car  
 With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war.  
 My sentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed  
 Perhaps by righteous heav'n that I must bleed! 310  
 My father, mother, all, I trust to thee;  
 To them, to them transfer the love of me:  
 But when my son grows man, the royal sway  
 Relinquish, and happy be thy bridal day!

I need not say how foreign this is to the original. In reality, Argos with different epithets, signifies different countries; 'Αχαΐα Argos means *Thessaly*, and 'Ιωνία Argos *Peloponnesus*; but here it denotes Greece universally; for it would appear absurd to tell Penelope, that all the Morea would admire her beauty; this would lessen the compliment; nor is any reason to be assigned why Peloponnesus should admire her more than the rest of the Greeks.

Such were his words ; and Hymen now prepares 315  
To light his torch, and give me up to cares ;

v. 313. *But when my son grows man, the royal sway  
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day.]*

The original says, *resign the palace to Telemachus* : this is spoken according to the customs of antiquity : the wife upon the second marriage, being obliged to resign the house to the heir of the family. This circumstance is inserted with great judgment : the suitors were determined to seize it upon marriage with Penelope, as appears from the second Odyssey.

*What mighty labours would he then create,  
To seize his treasures, and divide his state,  
The royal palace to the queen convey,  
Or him she blesses in the bridal day ?*

Penelope therefore by this declaration gives the suitors to understand, that the palace belonged not to her, but Telemachus. This assertion has a double effect ; it is intended to make the suitors less warm in their addresses ; or if they persist, to set the injustice done to Telemachus in open view. The beauty of all the speeches of Penelope in this book is so obvious that it needs no explanation. Homer gives her a very amiable character, she is good in every relation of life, merciful to the poor and stranger, a tender mother, and affectionate wife ; every period is almost a lecture of morality.

*My father, mother, all, I trust to thee ;  
To them, to them transfer the love of me.*

This shews the duty of the child to the parent ; it may be extended to all persons to whom we owe any duty ; and humanity requires that we should endeavour to ease the burden of our friends in proportion to their calamities ; we should at all times consult their happiness, but chiefly in the hour of adversity. A friend should be a support to lean upon in all our infirmities.



Th' afflictive hand of wrathful Jove to bear :

A wretch the most complete that breathes the air !

Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due !

Careless to please, with insolence ye woo ! 320

The gen'rous lovers studious to succeed,

Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed ;

By precious gifts the vow sincere display :

You, only you, make her you love your prey.

v. 223. *By precious gifts the vow sincere display :*

*You, only you, make her you love your prey.]*

Horace, lib. 2. Sat. 5. makes a very severe reflexion upon Penelope, and in her person (I say not how justly) upon the whole sex ; he gives the avarice of the suitors as the sole reason of Penelope's chastity ; and insinuates that women would sell their virtue, if men would be at the expence to buy.

*Venit enim magnum donandi parca juvenis,*

*Nec tantum Veneris, quantum studiosa culina.*

*Sic tibi Penelope frugi est : Quæ si semel uno*

*De fene gustarit, tecum partita lucellum ;*

*Ut canis a corio nunquam absterrebitur uncto.*

Horace had this passage in view, and imputes the coldness of Penelope to a want of generosity in her admirers. Diodorus assures us, that Venus had a temple in Ægypt dedicated to her under the title of *χρυσή Ἀφροδίτη* ; or *golden Venus* ; and it is her usual epithet throughout all Homer. Near Memphis there was an allotment of ground called *the field of golden Venus* : but it ought not to be concealed, that some persons believe she bears that name from the golden colour of her hair. Horace, to give his satire the greater strength, puts the words into the mouth of the prophet Tiresias, a person of unerring veracity.

*Y*

Well pleas'd Ulysses hears his queen deceive 325  
The suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give:

v. 325. *Well pleas'd Ulysses hears his queen deceive.  
The suitor train, and raise a thirst to give.*]

This conduct may appear somewhat extraordinary both in Penelope and Ulysses; she not only takes, but asks presents from persons whom she never intends to marry: Is not this a sign either of avarice or falshood? and is not Ulysses equally guilty, who rejoices at it? But in reality, Penelope is no way faulty; she deceives the suitors with hopes of marriage by accepting these presents, but it is for this sole reason that she accepts them; she intends to give them false hopes, and by that method to defer the nuptial hour: It is not injustice, but an equitable reprisal; they had violently wasted her treasures, and she artfully recovers part of them by a piece of refined management. Dacier defends her after another method: she believes that Penelope thus acts, not out of interest but honour; it was a disgrace to so great a princess to have so many admirers, and never to receive from their hands such presents as custom not only allows, but commands; neither is Ulysses blameable, who rejoices at his wife's policy. He understood her intent, and being artful himself, smiles to see her artfulness.

Plutarch, in his treatise of reading poems, vindicates Ulysses very much in the same way: If (says that author) Ulysses rejoiced at Penelope's art in drawing presents from the suitors out of avarice, he discovers himself to be a sordid prostitute of his wife; but if through a wise foresight he hoped by her acceptance of the presents, to get the suitors more into his power, by lulling them into security, and laying all their suspicions asleep, through a sudden prospect of marriage; if this occasioned his joy, this joy arising from her artful management, and from a full confidence in his wife, is no way blameable, but proceeds from a sufficient and laudable cause. In short, the suitors were enemies, and nothing could be practised dishonourably a-

Falsè hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray,  
And promise, yet elude the bridal day.

While yet she speaks, the gay Antinous cries,  
Offspring of kings, and more than woman wise! 330

'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,  
And custom bids thee without shame receive;

Yet never, never from thy dome we move,  
'Till Hymen lights the torch of spousal love.

The peers dispatch their heralds to convey 335  
The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.

A robe Antinous gives of shining dyes,  
The varying hues in gay confusion rise

Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold  
Close to the left'ning wait the vest infold; 340

gainst them, that either Ulysses or Penelope could act consistent with their own honour.

v. 327. *Falsè hopes she kindles*——] It is certain that the words in the Greek will bear a double construction, and *Σίλγῃ θυμὸν μελιχίοις ἐπέεσσιν* may refer either to Penelope or Ulysses. Eustathius thinks they are spoken of Ulysses; then the meaning is, that Ulysses comforted himself with her amusing words, while he formed a design very different from what her words expressed: but Dacier refers them to Penelope, perhaps with better reason: *Σίλγῃ* depends upon *φατο* in the preceding line, and by thus understanding it, the construction becomes easy and natural: and the sentence means, that Penelope's words flattered the suitors into hopes of marriage, while her thoughts were very distant from complying with their inclinations: this interpretation best agrees with the general design of Penelope, which was to act an artful part, and neither comply, nor absolutely refuse their addresses.

Down from the swelling loins, the vest unbound  
 Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.  
 A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,  
 That shot effulgence like the solar ray,  
 Eurymachus presents : and ear-rings bright, 345  
 With triple stars, that cast a trembling light.  
 Pisander bears a necklace, wrought with art ;  
 And ev'ry peer, expressive of his heart,  
 A gift bestows : This done, the queen ascends,  
 And slow behind, her damsel train attends. 350

Then to the dance they form the vocal strain,  
 'Till Hesperus leads forth the starry train ;  
 And now he raises, as the day-light fades,  
 His golden circlet in the deep'ning shades :  
 Three vases heap'd with copious fires display 355  
 O'er all the palace a fictitious day ;  
 From space to space the torch wide-beaming burns,  
 And sprightly damsels trim the rays by turns.

v. 355. *Three vases heap'd with copious fires display  
 O'er all the palace a fictitious day.]*

The word in the Greek, is *λαμπτήρ*, or a vase which was placed upon a tripod, upon which the ancients burnt dry and often times odoriferous wood, to give at once both perfume and light. Eustathius explains it by *χυτροπας*, or a vessel raised on feet in the nature of an hearth. Hesychius explains *λαμπτήρ*, an hearth placed in the middle of the house or hall, on which they burnt dry wood with intermingled torches to enlighten it. It is strange there is no mention of lamps, but only torches, in Homer; undoubtedly lamps were not in use in Greece, altho' much earlier found out by the Hebrews: Thus Exod. xxv. 6. oil is mentioned, and enjoined to be used in giving light to the sanctuary.



To whom the king: 'Ill suits your sex to stay  
Alone with men! ye modest maids, away! 360  
Go, with the queen the spindle guide, or cuff  
(The partners of her cares) the silver wool;  
Be it my task the torches to supply  
Ev'n till the morning lamp adorns the sky;  
Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care, 365  
Sleepless I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.

Scornful they heard: Melantho, fair and young,  
(Melantho, from the loins of Dolus sprung,  
Who with the queen her years an infant led,  
With the soft fondness of a daughter bred) 470  
Chiefly derides; regardless of the cares  
Her queen endures, polluted joys she shares  
Nocturnal with Eurymachus: with eyes  
That speak disdain, the wanton thus replies.  
Oh! whither wanders thy distemper'd brain, 375  
Thou bold intruder on a princely train?

Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous, repair;  
Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.

v. 259. ——— *Ill suits your sex to stay  
Alone with men! ye modest maids, away!*

Homer is perpetually giving us lessons of decency and morality. It may be thought that this interlude between Ulysses and the damsels of Penelope is foreign to the action of the *Odyssey*; but in reality it is far from it: the poet undertook to describe the disorders which the absence of a prince occasions in his family; this passage is an instance of it; and Homer with good judgment makes these wantons declare their contempt of Ulysses, and their favour to the suitors, that we may acknowledge the justice of their punishment in the subsequent parts of the *Odyssey*.



Proceeds this boldness from a turn of soul,  
 Or flows licentious from the copious bowl? 380  
 Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?  
 A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,

v. 377. *Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;*

*Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.* J

I flatter myself that I have given the true sense of χαλκῆος δόμος, and λίσχη; in Greece the beggars in winter retired by night to public forges for their warmth, or to some rendezvous where they entertained themselves as it were in a common assembly. Eustathius explains λίσχη to be a public place without any doors, where beggars were used to lodge. Hesychius gives us several interpretations of the word, that it signifies an assembly, a conversation; it implies also public stoves or baths; and Eustathius informs us from Aristophanes, that beggars used to take up their lodgings in the public baths, as well as in these places mentioned by Homer; χαλκῆος δόμος is an office of men that work in brass. He further observes that these two places are used after the same manner in Hesiod.

Πὰρ δ' ἴθι χαλκῆον δῶκεν, καὶ ἐπ' ἄλλια λίσχη

Ὄρη χειμαρὶν, ὅποτα κρύος ἀνέρας εἴργηεν  
 Ἰσχάνει.—

It may not be improper to observe that πὰρ δ' ἴθι δῶκεν χαλκῆον is very ill translated by *Accede aneam sedem* in the Latin version; it should be *supi officinam arariam*.

v. 381. *Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?*

The word in Homer is ἄλως, which is used in various places; sometimes (observes Plutarch in his treatise upon reading Poems) it signifies *being disquieted in mind*,

ὡς ἱρὰν. ἢ ἄλως ἀπιβύατο, τιμὰτο δ' αἰῶς.

In other places it implies *an insolent joy or boasting*; and then he quotes this verse,

Ἢ ἄλως ὅτε Ἴζον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν.

Who short'ning with a storm of blows thy stay,  
Shall send the howling all in blood away!

To whom with frowns : O impudent in wrong ! 385  
Thy lord shall curb that insolence of tongue ;  
Know to Telemachus I tell th' offence :  
The scourge, the scourge shall lash the into sense.

With conscious shame they hear the stern rebuke,  
Nor longer darst sustain the sovereign look. 390.

Then to the servile task the monarch turns  
His royal hands ; each torch refulgent burns  
With added day : meanwhile in museful mood,  
Absorpt in thought, on vengeance fix'd he stood.  
And now the martial maid, by deeper wrongs 395  
To rouse Ulysses, points the suitors' tongues :

v. 395. *And now the martial maid, by deeper wrongs*

*To rouse Ulysses, points the suitors' tongues.*]

It may be thought very unjustifiable in Homer, to introduce Minerva exciting the suitors to violence. Dacier defends the poet, by shewing that the sentiment is conformable to true theology : and the all-wise author of our being is pleas'd sometimes to harden the hearts of the wicked, (or rather to permit them to harden their own hearts) that they may fill up the measure of their crimes, and be ripe for judgment : Yet we are not to imagine, that any person is necessitated to be wicked : It is not the hardening the heart that originally makes men impious, but they are first impious, and then they are delivered over to an hardness of heart.

But Homer may be justified another way ; and Minerva may be understood to act thus in favour of Ulysses : The goddess of wisdom infatuates the suitors to insult that hero, and hasten their own destruction.

Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man,  
Thoughtless and gay, Eurymachus began.

Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends !  
Some god, no doubt, this stranger kindly sends ;  
The shining baldness of his head survey,  
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.

v. 400. *Some god, no doubt this stranger kindly sends.*]  
Aristotle affirms that Homer is the father of poetry ; not only of the epic, but also of the dramatic ; that he taught how to write tragedy in the *Iliad*, and comedy by several short sketches in the *Odyssey*. Eustathius here remarks, that he likewise gave a model for Satire, of which the Cyclops of Euripides, still extant, is an example ; (which is a satiric poem founded upon the story of Polypheme in Homer.) I confess my eye is not sharp enough to see the dignity of these railleries ; and it may be thought that Homer is the father of another kind of poetry, I mean the Farce, and that these low conceits are no way to be justified, but by being put into the mouths of the suitors, persons of no dignity or character. Longinus brings such descriptions of the suitors, as instances of the decay of Homer's genius. When that declines (observes that author) poets commonly please themselves with painting manners ; such is Homer's description of the lives led by the suitors in the palace of Ulysses : for in reality all that description is a kind of comedy, wherein the different characters of men are painted.

v. 401. *The shining baldness of his head survey,  
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.*]  
This in Dacier's judgment is a raillery purely satirical ; it is drawn from the shining gloss of an old man's bald head. But if this be purely satirical, to be a satirist is to be a bad man : To rally natural infirmities is inhumanity : Old age is venerable, and the bald head as well as the grey hair is an honour, and ought not be the subject of raillery.

Then to the king that levell'd haughty Troy.  
Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ

Those hands in work? to tend the rural trade, 405

To dress the walk, and form th'embow'ring shade?

So food and rayment constant will I give:

But idly thus thy soul prefers to live,

And starve by strolling, not by work to thrive.

To whom incens'd: Should we, O prince, engage 410

In rival tasks beneath the burning rage

Of summer suns, were both constrain'd to wield,

Foodless, the scythe along the burden'd field;

I doubt not but Homer put it into the mouth of Eurymachus to make him more odious, and to shew us that the same man who invades his prince's property, insults the stranger, and outrages the poor, pays not deference to old age, but is base enough to contemn what he ought to honour. Vice and folly are the province of satire, not human infirmity.

v. 412. ———— *Were both constrain'd to wield*

*Foodless, the scythe along the burden'd field.]*

I doubt not but such employments as these, now only suitable to low life, will seem mean to many readers, and unworthy of the dignity of epic poetry: It is no defence to say that they are mentioned by a beggar, and therefore agreeable to his character: The words are addressed to a prince, and suppose that a skill in such works was not unusual to persons of eminent stations; otherwise the challenge of Ulysses is ridiculously absurd. Who could forbear laughing, if he should hear one of our beggars challenge a peer, to plow or mow with him all day without eating? The truth is, the greatest persons followed such employments without any diminution of their dignities; nay, a skill in such works as agriculture was a glory even to a king: Homer here places it upon a level with mili-



Or should we labour while the plowshare wounds  
 With steers of equal strength, the allotted grounds ; 415  
 Beneath my labours how thy wond'ring eyes  
 Might see the fable field at once arise !  
 Should Jove dire war unloose, with spear and shield  
 And nodding helm, I tread th' ensanguin'd field, 419

tary science, and the knowledge of the cultivation of the ground is equalled to glory in war. In the preface to the pastorals of Virgil (but not written by Mr. Dryden) there is a passage that shews that the same simplicity of manners prevailed amongst the antient Latins, as among the antient Greeks : ' It ought not (says that author) to surprize a modern writer, that kings laid down their first rudiments ' of government in tending their mute subjects, their herds ' and flocks : Nor ought it to seem strange that the master ' of the horse to king Latinus in the ninth *Ænied* was ' found in the homely employment of cleaving blocks, ' when news of the first skirmish between the Trojans and ' Latins was brought to him.' This passage fully vindicates Homer, and shews that such employments were no dishonour to the greatest persons ; but there are two errors in the quotation ; it is not taken from the ninth, but the seventh *Ænied* ; nor is Tyrrheus, who cleaves the blocks, master of the horse to king Latinus, but the intendant of his flocks ; or as Dryden translates it,

*Tyrrheus, chief ranger to the Latian king.*

— *Tyrrheusque pater, cui regia parent  
 Armenta, et late custodia credita campi.*

Tyrrheus is no otherwise a warrior, than as a deer under his charge, being killed. engages him in a quarrel. and he arms the rustics to encounter the Trojans who slew it.

— *vocat agmina Tyrrheus*

*Quadrifidem quercum cuneis ut sorte coactis  
 Scindebat* —



Fierce in the van : Then wouldst thou, wouldst thou say,  
Misname me glutton in that glorious day ?

No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave disgrace ;

'Tis thou injurious art, not I am base.

Proud, to seem brave among a coward train !

But know thou art not valorous, but vain. 425

Gods ! should the stern Ulysses rise in night,

These gates would seem too narrow for thy flight.

While yet he speaks, Eurymachus replies,

With indignation flashing from his eyes.

Slave, I with justice might deserve the wrong, 430

Should I not punish that opprobrious tongue ;

Irreverent to the great, and uncontroul'd,

Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold ?

Perhaps, these outrages from Irus flow,

A worthless triumph o'er a worthless foe ! 435

He said, and with full force a footstool threw :

Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew ;

Ulysses, cautious of the vengeful foe,

Stoops to the ground, and disappoints the blow.

Not so a youth who deals the goblet round, 440

Full on his shoulder it inflicts a wound,

Tyrrheus, the foster-father of the beast,

Then clench'd an hatchet in his horny fist ;

But held his hand from the descending stroke,

And left his wedge within the cloven oak.

It is true, though Tyrrheus was not master of the horse to the king, yet his office was a post of dignity. otherwise it had been very easy for Virgil to have given him a more noble employment.

Dash'd from his hand the sounding goblet flies,  
He shrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathless lies.

Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the sky,  
'Till mutual thus the peers indignant cry ; 445  
O had this stranger sunk to realms beneath,  
To the black realms of darkness and of death,  
Ere yet he trod these shores ! to strife he draws  
Peer against peer ; and what the weighty cause ?  
A vagabond ! for him the great destroy, 450  
In vile ignoble jars, the feast of joy.

To whom the stern Telemachus arose !  
Gods ! what wild folly from the goblet flows ?  
Whence this unguarded openness of soul,  
But from the licence of the copious bowl ? 455  
Or heav'n delusion sends. But hence, away !  
Force I forbear, and without force obey.

Silent, abash'd, they hear the stern rebuke,  
'Till thus Amphinomus the silence broke.

v. 457. *Force I forbear, and without force obey.*]

This is very artful in Telemachus ; he had spoken warmly in defence of Ulysses, and he apprehends lest he should have provoked the suitors too far ; he therefore softens his expression, to avoid suspicions of a latent cause, why he interests himself so vigorously in vindication of a beggar, against the princes of the country. Besides, too obstinate an opposition might have provoked the suitors to have continued all night in the palace, which would have hindered Ulysses and Telemachus from concerting their measures to bring about their destruction : Telemachus therefore to induce them to withdraw, uses menaces, but menaces approaching to persuasion ; if he had used violence, matters must have immediately come to extremities.

True are his words, and he whom truth offends: 460

Not with Telemachus, but truth contends ;

Let not the hand of violence invade

The rev'rend stranger, or the spotless maid ;

Retire we hence ! but crown with rosy wine:

The flowing goblet to the pow'rs divine ; 465

Guard he his guest beneath whose roof he stands:

This justice, this the social rite demands.

The peers assent ; the goblet Mulius crown'd.

With purple juice, and bore in order round ;

Each peer successive his libation pours 470

To the blest gods that fill th' aereal bow'rs ;

v. 470. *Each peer successive his libation pours  
To the blest gods——]*

We have already observed that libations were made to the gods before and after meals ; here we see the suitors offer their libation before they retire to repose. We are not to ascribe this religious act to the piety of these debauchees, but to the customs of the times ; they practise not true religion, but only the exteriors of it ; they are not pious, but fashionable.

The action of this book is comprehended in a very short duration of time ; it begins towards the close of the day, and ends at the time when the suitors withdraw to repose ; this is the evening and part of the night of the thirty ninth day.

In general, this book in the Greek is very beautiful: The combat between Irus and Ulysses is naturally described ; it is indeed between beggars, but yet not without dignity, it being almost of the same nature with the single combats practised amongst heroes in their most solemn games ; as is evident from that in the Iliad, at the funeral of Patroclus. I could wish Homer had not condescended to those low jests and mean railleries towards the

Then swill'd with wine, with noise the crouds obey,  
And rushing forth tumultuous reel away.

conclusion: it is true, they are not without effect, as they agree with the characters of the suitors, and make Ulysses a spectator of the disorders of his own family, and provoke him to a speedy vengeance: but might not more serious provocations have been found out, such as might become the gravity and majesty of epic poetry? or if gaiety was essential to his characters; are quibbles so too? These may be thought of the same level with those conceits which Milton puts into the mouth of the devil, and which disgrace his poem. But the dignity, the tenderness, and justness of the sentiments, in all the speeches of Penelope, more than atone for the low railleries of Eurymachus.

THE END.

